

To Love A Sith

zgirl21

Star Wars

Complete



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Summary

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Description:

Two years after Senator Padme Amidala's rejection, Lord Vader seeks out the object of his obsession to rescue her and to claim her...An Episode Three Alternate Universe. COMPLETE.

1. Dark Knight

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter One

The Clone Wars had ended and the Republic lay in ruins at the feet of Chancellor Palpatine. The Senate had broken into small parts, each member desperately hanging onto their position by a loose thread. Each planet quickly pledged allegiance to Palpatine, immediately bestowing near sovereignty into his eager hands.

Fear struck into the hearts of every person as those who opposed Palpatine were rounded and executed. Palpatine quickly used his newfound power to establish an Empire. An Empire that would reign supreme and dictate over the entire galaxy. An Empire that would be ruled by Palpatine and his second in command... Lord Vader.

Ex-Senator Padme Amidala rushed to the window. An Imperial starship had just landed on Corusant and the entire city was in sudden turmoil and chaos. Padme realized that it was imperative that she go into hiding immediately, as there was a bounty out for every former senator that refused to join Palpatine and Vader.

Vader. That name sent a ghostly shiver up her spine. She knew next to nothing about the man except for the fact that he was formerly known as Anakin Skywalker. The man that still held her heart, despite their bitter parting two years ago.

She trembled with anxiety and fear at her thoughts. He had been so desperate. So desperate for her acceptance of his love. Yet, she could not. She could not bear to allow him to give up his lifelong dream, what he had given up so much for. He had to become a Jedi, or else his mother's death would have been in vain. And now, Shmi's death was in vain. Anakin was now Lord Vader, a dark, unfeeling being who had ventured into a world of tyranny and oppression. Anakin was now a man she prayed she would never have to see again in her lifetime. Yet, she had a sinking feeling that they would meet again all too soon.

Her thoughts were interrupted by her handmaiden, Sabe, who now stood breathlessly in front of her.

"M'lady, the transport is ready. Come quickly, we must go."

Padme nodded in quick response, gathered up the few belongings she had managed to pack and followed Sabe's hurried retreat. They both covered themselves with thin veils, in an attempt to disguise their presence.

The brisk walk to the transport went surprisingly smooth and they boarded without much trouble. Almost as quickly as they had boarded, the transport exploded with blaster fire and the passengers searched frantically for cover. Padme and Sabe rushed to the farthest corner they could find, knowing what would happen if they were discovered.

The blaster fire ceased abruptly and heavy footsteps made their way into the ship. One by one, each passenger was escorted from the transport with a blaster to their heads. A dark,

cloaked figure awaited for each passenger. He impatiently tapped his black boot on the ground. He had wasted enough time and he was not going to wait any longer to find what he was looking for.

“Lord Vader?”

“What?” He barked, irritated to have been interrupted from his thoughts.

“We found her.”

Those three words were what he had been hoping to hear and he turned on his heel to follow the storm trooper who had given him the long-awaited news. He had to stop himself from running the short distance between him and the passengers, now prisoners, aboard the suspected rebel transport. He grimaced at his quickened heart beat and the way his hands began to clench and unclench in nervousness. He had to get a hold of himself, after all, anxiety was not in his nature. Not until recently at least. He hadn’t felt this way for two years.

His pace quickened even more as he was now practically running to where three storm troopers stood. When they saw the dark cloak approaching, they quickly bowed and stepped aside, revealing a very frightened Padme and Sabe.

His heart clenched in his chest at his first sight of her in two years. She was still as beautiful as ever and her fear pleased yet alarmed him at the same time. Pushing that thought away, he shifted his gaze to his storm troopers.

“Well, what are you waiting for?”

The troopers immediately prodded Padme and Sabe with their blasters and then ceased swiftly after receiving a deadly stare from Lord Vader.

Padme walked quickly, trying desperately to hide her fear from the man, outwardly, was Anakin Skywalker. The way he seemed hover behind her, so close she could almost feel his breath on her ear, simply unnerved her. He seemed to sense her discomfort at his closeness, he maintained more of a distance between them. Once there was more space between them, she could think more clearly. Anakin or Vader was now her captor. What was he planning on doing with her?

Padme shifted nervously in her chair as she waited for her captor to arrive. He had followed them all the way to her new room, as he called it, and then had disappeared shortly. Her anxiety heightened with each passing moment. Was this how she was going to spend her last moments alive? With the monster that still managed to have a firm grip on her heart? Her heart beat accelerated when she heard foot steps from the hallway. This was it. The moment of truth.

Her captor walked briskly into the room. For the first time, Padme was able to really look at him. He looked the same, his hair was slightly longer and he seemed more muscular than before, but his beautiful eyes that still captivated her were colder and unfeeling. Not the eyes she had once drowned in two years ago, but yet, she felt herself drowning in them yet again.

Vader walked towards her until he was almost unbearably close. He smiled slowly as his eyes traveled along her small frame.

“Hello Padme.”

She refused to look at him, and after several moments of her silence, his smile faded slightly.

“You have nothing to say to me after all this time?”

She shook her head furiously, still refusing to make eyes contact with him.

His eyes narrowed slightly at her defiance. This would not do. She had to accept him. And if she didn’t, he would make her. He would not be rejected twice.

“Padme, I understand you were attempting to flee the Empire. However, I’ve been searching for you for some time now. In fact, I started searching the moment we started executing former Senators. You see, I couldn’t allow that to happen to you. A woman like you deserves so much more than that.”

“What, a slow, painful death as opposed to a quick shot to the head?” Padme fired back angrily, unwittingly breaking her silence.

His expression changed faintly at her outburst. Her voice was still melodious, even if she was furious with him.

“That’s not what I meant. I have absolutely no intention of killing you or harming you for that matter. The intent of my search was to rescue you from certain death.”

“Rescue me? Since when are you my knight in shining armor? Correct me if I’m wrong, but you are a mass murderer and a Sith lord. I want nothing to do with you, even if that seals my fate.”

His nostrils flared in sudden anger. She had some nerve to refuse his assistance.

“Padme, I don’t wish to argue with you. It’s very simple and you have no choice in the matter. What’s done is done. Final.”

Her eyes narrowed at the cruel smile that appeared on his handsome face.

“What are you talking about, Anakin?”

His face transformed from calm to menacing in a split second.

“That name no longer has any meaning to me!” He roared.

Padme didn’t flinch, yet his harsh words and angry tone both hurt and frightened her.

“I’m sorry. I suppose I don’t know what to call you.” She whispered.

He exhaled and drew another labored breath.

“Vader. My name is Vader.”

They were silent for several minutes. Vader contemplated the next best course of action while Padme desperately attempted to suppress her tears. Finally, Vader broke the uncomfortable silence.

“In regards to the matter at hand, you will become my wife in exchange for your life.”

A slight smile appeared yet again on his handsome face as he surveyed her shock. She, on the other hand, was completely outraged at what he was suggesting.

“I will never marry you!”

His slight smile turned into a sinister one.

“Like I said, you don’t have a choice.”

2. Beginning Of A New Life

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Two

Padme refused to believe what Vader had just uttered. This could not be happening. She would rather die than be forced to marry, even if it was Anakin. She quickly chastised herself. The man who stood before her was not Anakin. He was not the man that she had fallen in love with. Yet, she knew he was there, buried deep within himself. She noticed that whenever he looked at her, something changed in his eyes, even if it was for a split second. What was it? Love? Devotion? Whatever it was, it was Anakin. Just for a moment. She immediately pushed away those thoughts. Anakin no longer existed and only Vader remained. And he was forcing her to marry him.

“I will not give in to this.” She said bitingly.

Vader grinned at the memory.

“Glad to see you remembered the last time we were together. However, that’s not going to change your current situation. We will marry this evening.”

Padme’s jaw dropped open.

“What? This evening? I can’t... I won’t... this can’t happen... no... no.”

She began to tremble uncontrollably, her strong demeanor crumbling. He instinctively reached out to stroke her smooth cheek but she recoiled at his outstretched hand. He drew his hand back sharply and felt his anger flare again.

“Padme, no matter how much you fight, no matter how much you struggle, you will be mine. By the end of the day, you will be my wife and in my bed.”

She shook her head furiously. She couldn’t allow this to happen to her. Especially not this way.

“I suggest, my dear wife-to-be, that you prepare yourself for the upcoming event. In the meantime, I’m going to deal with some business. Your handmaiden will attend to you.”

With that, he turned on his heel and walked out of the room, his dark cloak swirling out behind him.

“I am pleased to hear your news, Lord Vader.”

“Thank you, Master.”

“I trust you will produce an heir shortly?”

“Of course, Master. Everything is going according to plan.”

“Excellent. You may go. Deal with the rebels and then prepare yourself for your wedding.”

“Thank you, Master.”

Vader walked slowly, for a change, towards the makeshift prison. He smiled to himself as his thoughts drifted to the upcoming event. He had waited two years for this and he was going to enjoy every second of it. Yes, he wanted an heir, as his Master did for the Empire, but he also wanted Padme. He had only wanted her, ever since he was a nine-year-old child on Tatooine. She haunted his dreams and his thoughts. There was nothing left to do except make her his wife. A faint chill ran down his spine at the thought. He hated himself for forcing her, but it truly was the only way to justify keeping her alive. He wanted so badly for her to want to marry him, yet the dark part of him also wanted her submission. The battle within himself unnerved him. He was a Sith lord. And Sith lords do not wish for love. Yet, somewhere, something was whispering to him that wishing for love was human. But then again, he was far from human.

He sighed as he entered the room. Four trembling Senators looked up at him, frightened for their lives. His previous thoughts forgotten, he focused on the matter at hand.

Turning to the storm trooper nearest to him, he said expectantly, “Well?”

Blaster shots rang out as the door slammed shut.

Padme nervously played with her chocolate curls that Sabe had so carefully arranged to flow down her back. She glanced at the white dress that had been placed on the bed for her. The beading on the soft satin was beautifully elaborate and she lightly traced it with her finger as she continued her study of her wedding dress. It was a simple style, its skirt flowed out slightly at the bottom and it had long sleeves of beaded lace to match. Yet, she nodded with satisfaction and wondered who had picked the dress out for her.

She glanced at the clock that sat nearby on the dresser. Twenty minutes and one of his minions would be coming for her. Twenty minutes until life as she knew it ceased to exist and she would be introduced to a new life. A new life with Vader as her husband. Sighing dejectedly, she knew that fighting it was useless. Her fate had been decided for her.

All too quickly, the time passed and before she knew it, she was dressed and was given a few white roses to hold. The expected knock caused her flushed cheeks to quickly pale. It was time.

The walk seemed to last forever as her thoughts swirled concerning what was about to happen. Without realizing, she was nervous, but not because she was afraid. Her feeling was similar to what she had expected herself to feel like and unbeknownst to her, a slight flush rose into her cheeks.

The doors opened for her and what she saw startled her. Vader stood several yards away from her. He was not dressed in his typical Sith uniform, but in a simple black linen shirt with black pants. He turned upon hearing her enter and she drew in a sharp breath. He was so utterly handsome she had to remind herself to breathe again. This time, she felt herself flush.

Vader took in the sight of his bride and felt the all-too-familiar clenching of his heart. She was breathtaking. Intoxicating. A pure vision. Soon, nothing would separate them and they would be joined forever.

She took a deep breath and walked the short distance towards her future husband. She took his outstretched palm and swallowed nervously as he tightened his hold on her hand.

“You’re beautiful.”

“Thank you.”

The ceremony began almost immediately with the priest and Emperor Palpatine as the only witnesses to the union. After they were pronounced husband and wife, Vader leaned forward and placed a surprisingly tender kiss on Padme’s soft lips.

He led her back to her room and silently opened the door for her. When she looked at him questioningly, he replied simply.

“I thought you would be more comfortable if we stayed in your room. After all, it’s much easier to move my things than yours.”

She smiled uneasily, unnerved at how he referred to his new sleeping arrangement.

He softly kissed her hand as he led her deeper into the room. She was slightly taken aback by his tenderness with her, yet allowed herself to feel something. Maybe even a little happiness. After all, not a day had gone by that she hadn’t wished she could take back that fateful night. However, she wished it didn’t have to happen this way. He was not Anakin. It seemed Anakin had died two years ago.

Yet, the man who moved closer to her looked and sounded exactly like Anakin. And that would have to be enough.

She allowed Vader to pick her up and place her on the bed. She allowed him to remove her wedding dress. She allowed herself to remove his shirt in between fervent kisses. She allowed his hands to roam the entire length of her body. She allowed a moan of pleasure to escape from her throat. She allowed him to make love to her because... she wanted him to. And even though that frightened her, she pushed away the thought and lost herself in the passion that was consuming them both.

3. A Contradiction

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Three

Padme opened her eyes sleepily and looked around. The room was strange and she wasn't in her bed. She sat up suddenly and her eyes fell on a sleeping Vader. Her new husband. For a second, she gazed at his handsome face, then quickly got out of bed and headed for the refresher.

She splashed some cool water on her face and stared at her reflection. She didn't look any different, now that she was a married woman. She had expected something to have changed, especially given the monster that was now her husband. What had happened to the man that had been Anakin Skywalker? The sleeping figure in her bed had the dangerously handsome face of Anakin, yet, he was Vader now. And Vader was a heartless murderer. He had killed millions of innocent people, not to mention countless members of the Senate and every Jedi that could be found. He was a contradiction. The face of an angel, and the mind of a monster. He had been so gentle with her earlier, almost loving, like a husband is supposed to treat his wife. And his eyes that were always so cold and unfeeling, they changed when he looked at her. She knew that he had held her heart from the moment they were reunited two years ago, and even now, she still loved him. And he could never know.

"What happened to you, Anakin? Where did you go?" She whispered.

Her thoughts were interrupted by moans coming from the bedroom. Cautiously, she left the refresher and walked slowly to the bed. Vader was tossing and turning. So, his nights were still haunted by nightmares.

"No, mom. No. NO!"

She rushed to his side and shook him gently. Before his eyes even opened, his hand shot out and closed around her throat.

The second his eyes opened, they widened in surprise and he quickly released her throat. She backed away from him, now extremely frightened of her husband. He swallowed nervously and sat on the side of the bed with his head in his hands.

"I'm sorry, Padme. I didn't realize..."

She shook her head uneasily. There was absolutely no excuse for what he had just done to her. Sith or no Sith. He couldn't treat her like that.

"Padme... look at me... please, I didn't mean..."

She dared to look at him and was met by somber, guilty eyes.

"I heard you and I was just trying to help you." She whispered.

He felt a pang of guilt pierce his heart. He really hadn't meant to hurt her. In truth, he hadn't realized that it was her.

"Padme..."

"What will you say when this happens again, and then when it happens after that and after that... I'm sorry isn't going to be good enough... I will not be treated this way."

"Padme, I swear to you... it will never happen again. I was disoriented and thought it was an intruder. What can I do? I'll do anything you ask."

She winced at his familiar words. The desperation in his eyes made her waver for a moment, yet she knew that she couldn't give in to him. She couldn't live life if this was the way he was going to treat her. Gentle one moment then ferocious the next. Besides, how did she know that he was even telling her the truth?

"I think you should leave." She whispered coldly.

His once soft and desperation eyes quickly turned to ice. He roughly pushed her out of his way and put on his discarded clothes. Then he left, but not before casting an irate glance in his wife's direction.

Padme let out a soft sob and covered her face with her hands. She couldn't live like this. She just couldn't.

Vader slammed his door shut as he entered and immediately began to savagely destroy anything and everything he could find. This was not how it was supposed to be. And on their wedding night of all nights. He berated himself for his instinctively brutal reaction to her innocent attempt to comfort him. He didn't know what had come over him. Yet, she should have forgiven him. He apologized, hadn't he? She had haughtily told him to leave, and he had obeyed her. What was happening to him? She had an effect on him, an effect that unnerved him. He didn't take orders from anyone except his Master. Yet, he had obeyed her. Reluctantly, but he had obeyed her wishes all the same.

He threw himself onto his bed and fell into a troubled sleep.

"Lord Vader?"

"What do you want?" was the muffled, yet rough reply.

"The Emperor wishes to speak with you."

"I'll be there shortly."

"Lord Vader, I trust you had a pleasant evening with you wife?"

"It was fine, my Master."

“Good. Now, you will go to the planets Naboo and Alderaan to round up the rebels that our intelligence has discovered. Once you find them, dispose of them immediately.”

“Yes, Master.”

Vader bowed dutifully and turned on his heel.

Padme was startled by the knock on the door. She immediately looked at Sabe and Sabe ran to answer the door. She smoothed the nonexistent wrinkles in her dress and took one last glance in the mirror.

Sabe barely got the door open as Vader pushed his way through.

His ice blue eyes locked with his wife’s soft chocolate ones. His eyes quickly flicked over her appearance and nodded with satisfaction. She was always beautiful. His thoughts immediately shifted to the previous night and his eyes seemed to turn even colder.

They stared at each other for several long moments, neither one wanting to be the first to speak.

Finally, Vader let out an exasperated breath.

“We’ll be leaving tomorrow.”

“Where are we going?”

“I have business to tend to on Naboo and Alderaan.”

Padme’s eyes sparked with hope and happiness.

“We’re going to my home?”

“Yes.”

She paused briefly to gather her thoughts.

“Can I visit my parents? I haven’t seen them in months and they don’t even know if I’m still alive.”

He studied her hopeful face and realized that he wouldn’t be able to deny her this. After all, she was his wife and despite their confrontation last night, he wanted her to have happiness.

“Yes, you can see your family.”

“Will you come with me?”

“If that is your wish.”

“It is.”

“Then I will accompany you.”

“Thank you.”

He nodded somewhat respectfully at her, then without much thought, he closed the short distance between them and kissed her cheek.

Then he turned on his heel, leaving a confused Padme alone in her room, with her hand softly resting on her cheek.

4. A Little Less Conversation

Author's Note: Just a note to clarify a few things. This is an alternate universe story set around the time of Episode Three. Everything happened in Episode Two up until the conversation by the fire. Padme rejected Anakin and they didn't see each other again until the time that our story begins. Also, being an AU story, Palpatine wants Vader to produce an heir for the Empire and Vader naturally chose Padme to help him with that. I'm sorry if there was any confusion with either of those things, but hopefully it's all cleared up now. Also, thank you to everyone who has given me feedback. It both encourages me to keep writing and gives me ideas, so keep reviewing!

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Four

Vader sat at the controls of the ship that would take him, about fifty storm troopers, and his wife to Naboo and Alderaan. They had been in hyperspace for an hour now and he intended to keep his distance from his wife. Right now, he was sincerely regretting the kiss he had given her the last time he had seen her. He definitely didn't want her to believe that she could push him around. He had been gracious enough to allow her to visit her family, but he was still enraged at her refusal of his genuine apology. Why did she have to be so damn difficult?

He eyes closed at the familiar tremor in the Force that flowed down his spine. Padme was coming. He hated yet loved her the way her presence made him feel. He felt at peace whenever she was near, and that was a sensation he was not used to feeling.

A soft knock came from the cockpit door. Without thought, he used the Force to open the door.

Padme entered cautiously, still not completely sure she had made the right decision in coming to talk to him. Yet, he had let her in and that meant he didn't entirely despise her for the way she had treated him on their wedding night.

"I didn't mean to disturb you... I just wanted to apologize for my behavior earlier."

Vader was silent, yet he motioned for her to sit in the co-pilot's seat next to him. She sat down and now they were face to face. His silence prodded her to continue.

"I'm going to be completely honest with you. I was absolutely furious that you would treat me that way. There is no excuse for it, there never will be, and it can't continue. And I promise you, I will kill myself before I become a timid and abused little wife."

His eyes narrowed at her words and his anger flared up again at her.

"I will not be ordered around, Padme. I am Lord Vader and you will obey *me*."

"Would let me finish, please?"

They stared at each other for a few moments, and then he nodded in resignation.

"I realize, however, that your apology was sincere. I should have taken you in my arms and rocked you back to sleep, but I had to prove my point to you. I suppose that's the politician in me, but do you understand what I'm telling you? I was wrong to ask you to leave, just as you were wrong to choke me. We were both at fault. I don't want you to be angry with me for this any longer because that would make both our lives miserable."

He took a deep breath, contemplating what she was saying. Perhaps a compromise was a possibility.

"What do you suggest?"

"I suggest that you accept my apology, just as I have accepted yours."

"Apology accepted."

"Thank you."

"You're welcome."

"Will you promise me something?"

"What?"

"Promise me you'll never do that again."

He sighed deeply.

"Padme, I promise that I will never harm you again. That is, if you promise never to order me around again."

She smiled softly.

"We have an agreement then."

They exchanged brief but tender smiles and then settled back in their chairs for several comfortable moments of silence. Padme glanced at her handsome husband and realized that she had forgotten about the darkness that lingered inside him. She decided that now was as good a time as any to find out.

"How did you turn?"

Her question startled him and he shifted curious eyes towards her direction.

"You don't know?"

She shook her head.

"I was told that you had left the Jedi Order after your mother died but I never your reason for leaving."

He nodded in understanding. For some reason, he felt that he could confide in her.

"Shortly after the replacement for my position as your bodyguard arrived, I went back to Tatooine to find my mother. I discovered that not only had Watto sold her to a man named Clieg Lars, but he had freed her and married her. I was too late, though. Tusken raiders had kidnapped her and by the time I reached her, she was already dead. My grief turned to anger, then the anger to rage, and then... I felt waves of darkness wash over me. The helplessness I

had felt before was gone and I realized that I could do something. So I killed them all. I butchered them like animals because they were animals.”

“Oh Ani...”

His eyes turned into blue chips of ice.

“I’m not him. He died the day my mother did.”

“I’m sorry... but please... I need to know.”

His jaw clenched tightly, barely suppressing the anger he felt at hearing the name of his despicable former self.

“I felt powerful; I felt I had a purpose. The Jedi’s power derives from everything that is weak and worthless but what I felt that night on Tatooine was more than just an adrenaline rush. Something changed in me that night. The useless Jedi could have never stopped my mother from dying because that’s not in their mandate,” he growled. “But the Dark Side of the Force... it’s dominant and had the answers I have been searching for my entire life. If only I had discovered this before my mother died... I could have prevented everything that happened to her... I would have been able to save her from being kidnapped... from dying... the Jedi couldn’t understand. But the Emperor, my Master, he understood. And he helped me see what had always been right in front of me.”

He paused, measuring her reaction to his words.

“What did he help you see?” She whispered softly.

He grinned darkly.

“Magnificent, all-encompassing, un-surpassive supremacy.”

She swallowed nervously, disturbed at his choice of words. Several minutes passed between them as she contemplated her next comment and he observed her uneasiness at the present conversation.

“What happened after that?”

“I left the Order and joined the Emperor. Together, we hunted down every loathsome Jedi that could be found. The only ones who managed to get away were Yoda and my former Master. But, it’s only a matter of time until they’re found.”

She nodded in perturbed understanding as he continued.

“Once the Jedi were out of the way, the Senate signed over practically any rights they had and the Empire was established.”

Padme sighed, already knowing that part of his story. She had fought for those rights desperately, and out of fear and foolishness, those rights had been given away on a sheet of paper.

Instinctively knowing what she was thinking, he added: “I noticed your signature was absent from that bill.”

She looked up and was met with curious, yet cruelly glimmering eyes.

“I couldn’t stomach signing it, especially since I’ve spent the better half of my life trying to protect everything the bill was giving away. Did you really expect me to support what you and Palpatine were doing?”

“No,” he grinned. “That just wouldn’t be in your character, would it? Padme, you’re so predictable, and one of the most influential members of the Senate. If I hadn’t stepped in on your behalf, you would be dead by now.”

She grimaced, wishing that he hadn’t brought that up.

“Oh yes, how could I forget?”

He grinned sinisterly and ran a finger lightly over her lips.

“My sweet Padme... trust me, I’ll never let you forget.”

He leaned closer to her and began to kiss her, first with building passion, then with building possession.

5. Home Sweet Home, Part One

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Five

Vader and Padme silently walked the streets that would lead them to her family's home, each buried deep in their own thoughts. Padme worried that her family's reaction to her recent marriage would be devastating as Vader realized that he hadn't experienced family in years, and now, Padme's family was his family as well. However, their thoughts were interrupted by two very excited children.

"Aunt Padme!" Ryoo and Pooja almost toppled Padme over as they tried to jump in her waiting arms.

"My favorite nephew and my favorite niece! I've missed you so much!"

Pooja laughed into her aunt's soft hair.

"You're silly, Aunt Padme. I'm your only niece."

"Yeah, and I'm your only nephew."

Padme clasped her hand to her forehead in feigned surprise.

"You're right. You're both so smart and I'm so forgetful."

The three shared a laugh and finally, Ryoo and Pooja noticed an uncomfortable Vader standing a few inches away from Padme.

"Who is that, Aunt Padme?"

She pushed herself up to stand next to her husband and sighed.

"Ryoo, Pooja, this is your new uncle. His name is Lord Vader."

Pooja's jaw dropped open in shock, but Ryoo just looked at his new uncle with curiosity.

"I thought you looked familiar. Do you want me to call you Uncle Vader or Uncle Lord Vader?" He asked innocently.

Vader smiled in spite of himself and leaned over to Ryoo.

"You can just call me Uncle."

"Ok, Uncle."

With that, Ryoo took his uncle's hand and led him into the house with Padme and Pooja close behind.

"Mom, Dad?"

Jobal Naberrie came running out of the kitchen.

“Oh my gods! Padme! My darling daughter! We thought you were dead! The holo-news kept saying that every politician on Corusant was dead!”

“Mom, mom, calm down. I’m fine. I’m in one piece, ok?”

Jobal took a deep breath and then gathered her daughter in her arms as Ruwee walked in.

“Padme! Thank gods you’re alright!”

He too ran over and embraced his daughter.

After the reunion’s immediate joy subsided, Padme’s parents noticed the tall, dark man still in the doorway.

“Padme, is that who I think it is?”

“Dad, before you say anything...”

“Padme, this is Lord Vader! What is he doing here with you...”

Padme sighed briefly and she motioned for Vader to join her side.

“Lord Vader is my husband, as of three days ago.”

Her parents froze in shock, with their mouths hanging open, refusing to believe the news their beloved daughter had given them.

“You can’t be serious.” Ruwee gasped.

“I can’t believe you, Padme!” Her mother yelled.

“Mom, Dad, let me explain...”

“If I may,” Vader cut in. “I found Padme at a rebel transport three days ago. As you well now, any rebel found is an enemy of the Empire, and Padme was going to be killed. I stepped in on her behalf and the only way to secure her safety was for us to marry.”

Vader’s words hung in the air and the tension in the room grew even thicker.

Ruwee’s eyes narrowed in consideration of what his new son-in-law had just uttered.

“Are you trying to tell me that you rescued my daughter? A vocal enemy of the Empire? Why would you do that for her...?”

“Dad, please... this is supposed to be a happy occasion... even if you’re not pleased with my current situation, at least I’m still alive. Let’s just eat, ok?”

Ruwee opened his mouth to speak again then shut it almost immediately. There was no used fighting it, they were already married. But he wouldn’t rest until he found his answer.

After a quiet, uneventful dinner, Sola, Jobal, and Padme started on cleaning up. Vader and Ruwee still sat at the table and Ruwee carefully watched Vader’s eyes shift awkwardly from his daughter and back to himself.

“Lord Vader?”

Vader pulled his eyes away from his wife and settled on Ruwee. He nodded to him, politely waiting for Ruwee to speak again.

“Would you care to join me outside? There are several issues I’d like to speak to you about.”

“Certainly.”

The men announced their departure, leaving the women alone.

Jobal watched them leave, grateful for the chance to talk to Padme alone.

“Alright, Padme. I want you to be completely honest with me. What happened? How did you let this happen?”

Padme exhaled, knowing this conversation was bound to happen and her mother and sister watched her expectantly.

“Mom, he already told you. I would be dead right now if it weren’t for him.”

“So I’ve heard, but that’s not the whole story now is it? Padme Naberrie, you tell me everything, now!”

“You forget, Mom. She’s Padme Naberrie Vader now.”

Both Padme and Jobal winced at Sola’s icy reminder.

“First of all, I’m absolutely fine. I’m being taken care of and treated well. You don’t have anything to worry about.”

“Yes we do, Padme. That horrible monster forced you into marriage. Don’t even try to tell me that he hasn’t forced himself on you, because I won’t believe it.”

“But, Mom, he hasn’t. The only time that ever happened was on our wedding night and I was a willing participant.”

“I can’t believe I’m hearing this. Do you realize what you’re saying?”

“I do realize what I’m saying and Anakin is...”

“Wait, what? You just called Vader Anakin.”

Padme swallowed nervously, knowing that she was going to be cornered into admitted something she could barely admit to herself.

“Lord Vader used to be Anakin Skywalker.”

“Yes, I know that Padme. But why did you call him Anakin?”

“I knew him before he... turned evil. He was in love with him and I... I rejected him. I couldn’t let him give up his life for me, despite... well, I guess that doesn’t matter now does it? He’s a Sith and evil and...”

“Padme, did you love Anakin?”

Padme paused uneasily, unsure if she was ready to talk about this. She took a shaky breath.

“Yes I did.”

The room fell silent as the words poured out of Padme.

“I don’t think I’ve ever stopped.”

“Oh dear.”

Again, the room fell silent. Each woman digesting what had just occurred.

“I’m just so confused. Sometimes, he’s so gentle and careful with me. I almost think that he’s Anakin, and then he’ll just turn cold and unfeeling. My husband has the face of the man that I love, yet I don’t know who he is. I don’t know if I’m in love with Vader or Anakin.”

Jobal and Sola were silent. Both women wished there was a way to help her, but there wasn’t. Padme was fighting a losing battle.

All three women went back to cleaning up, each one keeping a close eye on the two figures outside.

6. Home Sweet Home, Part Two

Author's Note: Thanks to Jelp for pointing that out for me and I fixed the little problem in Chapter Five. Also, thanks again to everyone who was reviewed. I really appreciate the feedback!

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Six

Vader and Ruwee walked in silence for awhile. Due to his present awkwardness, Vader took the opportunity to survey the beautiful landscaping near the house and the lush garden slightly down the path, and he surprised himself by smiling. Padme's home was breathtaking and, for some odd reason, it felt like home to him.

Ruwee observed Vader carefully in his silence. The uncertainty of Vader's true intentions towards Padme was nagging at him and he didn't know how much more of Vader's silence he could take.

"Why did you help my daughter?" The silence was broken.

Vader was slightly startled at the way the conversation was beginning.

"I told you. She was going to be killed."

"Yes, I already knew that. But out of all the Senators that refused to pledge loyalty to the Emperor, why did you help *her*?"

Vader took a deep breath, uneasy at where the conversation was headed.

"I knew her when I was a child, when she was Queen. Her ship had broken down and I helped her get the parts she needed to fix it. We didn't see each other for another ten years, and I was, at the time, a Jedi padawan. I was actually assigned to be her bodyguard. After my leave of the mission was granted, I became a Sith shortly after that."

"You still haven't answered my question."

Vader frowned at Ruwee's reply. He thought he had answered Ruwee's question, but maybe he didn't really know the answer himself.

"I'm sorry; I thought I had answered it sufficiently."

"It's alright. Maybe that was too complex a question to start out with."

Vader smiled slightly, grateful for the change of topic.

"I am willing to answer any questions you have."

"Good. Shall we take a walk?"

Vader nodded and followed his father-in-law.

Their walk continued in silent thought of the conversation that was about to take place. Vader took a deep breath and decided to be the first to speak for once.

“Mr. Naberrie...”

“Ruwee.”

Vader nodded respectfully.

“Ruwee, I realize what you must be thinking. And I assure that any reservations you have about my marriage with your daughter will not be held against you in any way. But please, know that my intentions are to protect Padme. I would never hurt her or let any harm come to her.”

Ruwee was silent, taking in everything that Vader had said. He decided to investigate Vader a little further.

“So... you knew Padme when she was Queen, and you became... reacquainted with her several years ago?”

“Yes.”

“And you were her bodyguard yet you haven’t seen her for two years?”

“That’s correct.”

Ruwee paused, slowly realizing that Vader’s true intentions were hidden somewhere in between his words.

“What happened between you and Padme?”

“What do you mean?”

“Why did you need to be relieved of your duties as her bodyguard?”

Vader swallowed nervously, not completely sure he wanted to talk about this particular subject with the father-in-law he just met.

“Well... you see...”

Vader rubbed the back of his neck uncomfortably, unsure how to even begin. Ruwee observed his son-in-law curiously and smiled knowingly.

“Say no more.”

Then after a short pause, he added: “She’s quite a pistol, isn’t she?”

A genuine grin spread across Vader’s handsome face.

“She certainly is. A lot more than I expected actually. Trust me, I’m never going to underestimate her again.”

They shared a good-natured laugh and for awhile, the atmosphere was almost pleasant.

“If I may, Lord Vader, I must ask you something that has been bothering me.”

Vader nodded his permission.

“How do you intend on keeping my daughter out of harm’s way? The universe isn’t exactly a safe and stable place right now.”

“I will have guards with her at all times, especially when I’m not there.”

“Why did you bring her along on this particular mission, then?”

Vader was startled by the unexpected question and came to the slow realization that Ruwee was right. He never should have brought Padme along. But he couldn’t help himself. He had to be near her, he just didn’t feel right if she wasn’t with him.

“Well, I... since we just married and there are plenty of storm troopers with us... I thought it was safe for her.”

Ruwee nodded; however, he knew that Vader’s real reason for bringing Padme was simply to spend more time with her.

“I see. I suppose, given the current status of the universe, if she’s safe with anyone, it would be you.”

“Definitely. There’s no way I’m going to allow any harm to come to her.”

Ruwee nodded slowly. There was more to this than Vader was letting on.

“I’m sorry to bring up a dead issue, but I have to know. Why did you choose Padme? Why did you help her?”

Vader swallowed apprehensively. He was definitely not pleased that the conversation was back to this because he didn’t know how to answer Ruwee’s question. The dark part of his conscience was telling him he had finally been able to accomplish as a Sith what he never could as a Jedi. Yet, some other unknown part of him told him he had married Padme for a completely different reason. But he knew he couldn’t tell Ruwee either of those possibilities.

“I’m sorry, Ruwee, but I’m afraid I don’t know how to answer your question. I thought I had already answered it earlier and I’m sorry if that wasn’t what you were looking for. However, it’s the only answer I can give.”

“Alright then. Let’s head back to the house, shall we?”

Ruwee purposefully lagged behind his son-in-law, watching him carefully as they walked back to the house. So, the only answer Vader could give was the fact that Padme was going to die. That in itself was answer enough, he supposed. Was it possible that Vader was in love with his daughter?

Jobal, Sola, and Padme sat at the table talking quietly when the men walked back in.

“Oh good, you’re back. Did you boys have fun talking?” Jobal inquired.

“It was educational.” Ruwee replied, casting Vader a sideways glance.

Jobal’s forehead crinkled in confusion, but she let it go. She knew her husband would explain later.

Vader glided over to his wife and leaned down to her.

“Would you like to take a walk with me?” He whispered in her ear.

“Of course.” She smiled softly.

He extended his arm to her and led her into the awaiting dusk.

Jobal and Ruwee exchanged glances as they watched what had just transpired between their daughter and her husband.

“It’s worse than I thought, Ruwee. She’s in love with him.”

“Maybe not, dear. I think he’s in love with her too.”

Jobal’s jaw dropped in complete shock and they turned to look out the window, curiously observing the two figures walking towards the brilliant sunset. In the midst of the surrounding dusk, they almost looked like one form, making it difficult to tell where one ended and the other began.

7. The Manipulated Slave

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Seven

Vader and Padme were silent for awhile, both enjoying the other's company because for once, they weren't arguing. She led him calmly to her family's garden and began picking several flowers, humming softly to herself. Vader watched her, almost as if in a trance, completely transfixed by her natural beauty. He had never met anyone else like her, so beautiful both outside and inside. She was so pure, intelligent, ambitious, and still possessed that regal nature she wore so well as Queen. She was perfect and she was his.

"Do you know how long it's been since I had enough time to actually pick flowers?"

He smiled slightly at her question and shook his head.

"Ten years. It was my first real 'vacation' after the Trade Federation Blockade, and I spent most of my time, right here, tending to this garden. I loved it, I really did, but then my vacation ended and I had to go back to being a Queen. That was the last time I ever really had a significant amount of time to myself. Since then, I can't remember the last time I just sat down and took a breath. Everything still hasn't sunk in, the Republic falling, the rise of the Empire, you and I... I feel like I'm in a bad dream and I'll just wake up soon."

Vader was silent, wondering where she was going with this.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to..."

"No, it's alright, Padme. I understand your feelings about the fall of the Republic."

Her eyes slightly widened in shock, not completely comprehending what he had just said.

"I appreciate your honesty," he continued. "and it's important that you feel you can confide in me. I am your husband after all."

She smiled softly at his gentle reminder of their situation. She looked up and felt herself melt from the tender gaze that met hers. He certainly had an effect on her and now, she was starting to like it.

"You know, I think this is the first real time we've had alone together since we've been married." She said.

When he looked at her confused, she continued.

"I know we had time on the ship but that conversation was a little more hostile than now."

He smiled slightly and nodded his agreement.

"What would you like to do with our time?" He laughed.

"Hold on. I'll be right back."

His forehead crinkled in confusion and amusement as he watched her run back into the house. She re-emerged several minutes later with a blanket in hand. She grabbed his hand and led him to a large, shady tree near the garden. Once the blanket was spread on the cool grass, they laid down, carefully making sure there was comfortable space between them.

"This was my favorite spot. Whenever I just needed to sort things out or just needed to relax, I came right here."

She cast him a light-hearted glance and smiled softly. He returned the easy smile and his heart caught in his throat when she slowly reached over and took his hand in hers.

"So... this is where you came to dream about all the good things you would do, all the people you would help."

Her smile faded and her eyes darkened slightly.

"A lot of good that did." She remarked bitingly.

"Padme, regardless of what happened to the Republic, you made a difference. Why do you think so many people wanted you dead?"

"Thank you for the reminder. It really doesn't matter anymore, now does it? The Republic is gone, everything I ever stood for is gone and..."

"And what?"

"I'm married you."

"I'm sorry. I didn't know that was a bad thing."

"I never said that, it's just..."

"What?"

"I just never pictured my wedding that way. When I was a little girl, I always dreamed of this huge, lavish extravaganza with white roses and cute little flower girls. I had always thought that was the way it was going to happen for me. Some handsome prince would come and sweep me off my feet and we would live happily ever after. But things don't always work out the way you think they will. I've certainly learned that the hard way."

Vader didn't know how to respond to that. Her words made him instantly regret his 'proposal' and the wedding itself, but at the same time, her words overjoyed him. She wasn't proclaiming hatred for him because he had forced her to marry him, she was simply saying she wished the wedding had been more like she had envisioned for herself.

"I'm sorry about that Padme, I really am. I wish it could have happened differently, but we didn't have time for that. Once this mission is complete, we can go back to Corusant and settle for awhile."

She smiled softly. Sometimes, she found it so difficult to not pull him to her and declare her love for him. But that was too much of a risk. A Sith wasn't supposed to love, just hate. But he didn't hate her. She was sure of that. So what were his feelings towards her then? Was she just with him to produce an heir or was there more to it that he wouldn't admit to? He was an enigma to everyone he came in contact with. So gentle one moment, and so cold the next.

“That sounds nice.”

“As soon as the rebels are taken care of we can go home.”

She froze and their once intertwined hands fell apart. Her mouth gaped open in shock and she sprang to her feet.

“Please don’t tell me you’re going to do what I think you’re going to do.”

His browed furrowed in confusion. Everything had been fine moments before. What it something he said?

“Padme, I don’t know...”

“What do you mean you don’t know? Of course you know. You’re going to kill rebels here on Naboo. That’s your mission, isn’t it? To kill rebels on Naboo and Alderaan?”

She was screaming now and he winced involuntarily as her anger towards him increased.

“Padme, it’s not your place to be angry with me for simply doing my duty.”

She laughed haughtily and shoved him away from her.

“Not my place? I am your wife. I have a right to be angry with you for anything I want!”

His jaw clenched to suppress his anger. He really didn’t want to fight with her, especially about this, but she was pushing him over the edge.

“Padme, I don’t want to have to tell you again...”

“You can’t order me around. I’m not your slave.”

His eyes narrowed at the word ‘slave’. She had better watch herself.

“That’s enough. I think it’s time that we went back to the ship anyway.”

“No, I’m not through talking to you! Do you want to know what I think?”

“Not particularly. We need to go back to the ship.”

“No! I’m not leaving until you’ve heard what I have to say to you! You know, he’s really got you wrapped around his finger, doesn’t he? You’re nothing but Palpatine’s puppet and his executioner. What’s wrong with you? Can’t you think for yourself? Make your own decisions?”

His anger flared at the biting sarcastic comment. How dare she even suggest that!

“He’s been manipulating you this entire time,” she continued. “And you know what else? I know the real reason you wanted to marry me. Because deep down, you’re still nothing but a slave-boy who couldn’t get over a silly crush!”

His hand shot out to strike her but he quickly dropped it frustration. They glared at each other and his hands clenched and unclenched involuntarily in rage.

“Go say goodbye to your parents.” He said, frighteningly calm.

“No... I’m not going anywhere with you.”

He grabbed her roughly by the arm and forced her to start walking towards the house.

“Yes you are. We’re leaving and like you said before, you are my wife and you will listen to me! Now, if you don’t cooperate, we’re going to leave without saying goodbye to your parents.”

Padme jerked her arm out of his hand and raised her chin slightly in desperate defiance.

“I hate you.”

“That’s fine with me. Go inside and if you’re not out in three minutes, I’m coming to get you.”

She nodded in defeat, knowing that no matter what she said, they were still leaving. She ran into the house, quickly hugged and said goodbye to her family without explanation, and ran back out to her fuming husband.

He took her by the arm again, this time more forcefully than before, and before she knew it, they were on the ship.

8. For The Sake Of Making A Point

Author's Note: Thanks to everyone that's reviewed. It means a lot to hear what you think and feel free to take guesses at what's going to happen next! Thanks again!

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Eight

Padme rushed into her quarters on the ship in a mad frenzy. Tears flowed freely down her cheeks and she clawed at her face in frustration. She had pushed him too far, she shouldn't have said what she did. She so badly wished that she could take everything back, to have everything go back to the way things were before she had flown off the handle. Though, it wasn't as if he didn't deserve it. Maybe he needed to hear the truth about himself and his actions, even if she had been too harsh with her choice of words. Besides, his mission was to kill her colleagues and her friends and she there was no way she would condone it.

She threw herself onto the bed, the sound of her anguished sobs suppressed by the pillows.

Four storm troopers watched Vader pace back and forth around the main chambers of the ship. He was irate, to put it mildly, and this was a mood that caused others to run from him in complete fear.

Vader was enraged, still barely comprehending all of the horrible words that had flown out of his wife's mouth. No one ever talked to him like that. Not even his Master. Everyone else knew better, but she apparently didn't. He had been wrong before, she was unpredictable. And insufferable. Had he made a mistake when he had saved her from certain death? Was he in over his head with her? Something deep within him was whispering that he had known exactly what he was doing. It hadn't been a mistake. But that didn't mean he could forgive her. She had said she hated him.

His pacing relented and he resigned himself to the cockpit, deep in thought.

"Lord Vader?"

Vader was thrown out of his thoughts and turned his head in anger and annoyance to the nervous storm trooper in front of him.

"You better have a good reason."

"Yes, milord. We've arrived at Theed Palace."

"Good."

The shaken storm trooper turned to leave but halted as Vader spoke again.

"And when we land, make sure my wife comes to the Palace as well."

The storm trooper nodded and quickly left the cockpit. Vader settled back in his chair and stretched his arms over his head. A cruel smile spread across his face as he thought of his wife's reaction to his orders. She would be a witness to the fulfillment of his duty. Now he had a point to prove to her. It wasn't revenge, he assured himself, it was simply proving to her that his duty prevailed above everything else, including her.

"Milady? Are you there?"

Padme sighed and after quickly cleaning herself up, she flung open the door to reveal a nervous storm trooper. She waited expectantly.

"We've landed at Theed Palace. Lord Vader has instructed me to bring you inside."

Padme simply nodded, shocked by her husband's orders. He was going to make her watch. She was going to have to be witness to the deaths of many of her friends. Did he want her to hate him for the rest of her life?

She closed her eyes in a desperate attempt to regain some ounce of strength. Then with a heavy heart, she followed the storm trooper into Theed Palace.

After a short walk in the warm morning air, they entered a crowded room. Everywhere she looked she saw the frightened faces on her fellow Nubians, sitting in chairs or pacing nervously, awaiting their imminent fate. It was heartbreaking because she not only recognized many of the faces, but she knew there was absolutely nothing she could do to help them. At the other side of the room, she recognized a certain black cloak and wasn't sure if her blood was boiling or freezing.

Their eyes locked a for split second, both feeling a chill run down their spines.

"He can't possibly expect me to stay here when he..." She murmured under her breath.

"What milady?" asked the storm trooper who had escorted her in.

"He isn't going to keep me here, while he... completes his mission, is he?"

"His only orders for me were to keep you in this room. I'm sorry if that upsets you, but I have a duty to follow my orders."

"I've been hearing that a lot lately." She replied sarcastically.

Suddenly, the room fell silent as Vader began to speak.

"Today is judgment day for each of you. You all have a choice, either declare allegiance to the Emperor or die. Those that wish to live may voice that request now. As for the rest of you, I strongly urge you to reconsider."

Vader was surprisingly patient as he waited for his captives to decide. After a few moments, only a few stepped forward to declare loyalty to the Emperor. Vader nodded to the storm troopers nearby and the firing began.

Padme covered her mouth in horror as the blaster shots began to fire. She screamed and struggled to run out of the room, but strong hands forced her to stay put.

“Noooo! Leave me alone! I can’t stay here!” She screamed amidst the cries of pain and anguish that filled the room.

She sank to her feet and covered her face with her hands, desperately trying to block out what was happening around her. She stayed that way until the firing ceased and heavy footsteps came towards her.

“Padme? Look at me, Padme.”

She shook her head furiously, not wanting to have anything to do with the owner of the voice.

“Don’t make me drag you out of here. You don’t want to stay in here anyways.”

She quickly sprang to her feet. He was right about that at least. There was no way she could remain in a room full of death. She ran as fast as her feet could carry her, desperately trying to outrun the footsteps behind her. After only a few moments, she felt a pair of strong arms enclose around her. She struggled as fiercely as she could, slapping and clawing at every part of him she could find.

“Padme, no! Padme! Stop!” He yelled as he forced her arms at her side. She still had refused to look at him.

“Padme, look at me.”

“Why would I want to look at a monster?”

His jaw clenched and he forced back his frustration at her actions.

“I hate you! I hate you, I hate you, I hate you! You’re despicable and I will never speak to you again as of this moment!”

“Fine! If you want to live like that, I won’t stand in your way. That storm trooper will take you back to the ship. And don’t expect anything from me ever again!”

She spat on him and he recoiled in disgust. Shaking his head at her in irritation and stalked off.

Her eyes filled with anguished tears as she watched him walk away. How could he do that to her and then expect everything to be alright? She couldn’t forgive him for this. He was an evil monster and she was doomed to live the rest of her life in the shadow of that evil.

“Milady? Lord Vader has instructed that you return to Corusant at once. He said he will return when his business on Alderaan is complete. Come milady, it’s time to go home.”

Padme wiped the fresh tears from her eyes and followed the storm trooper to the ship. It was just as well that she left now. She wanted nothing to do with her husband or his mission and needed time to consider everything that had gone wrong in her life.

9. Contemplations

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Nine

“Daddy, Daddy! You’re home!” cried the tiny girl with brown curls.

Padme laughed as her daughter sprinted the distance between herself and her father. Her smiled brightened as her son followed suit and both of her children pounced on their father, all three laughing hysterically.

“Alright, alright! Are you trying to kill me? Ok, jeez, I’m happy to see you too.” Anakin set his children back down and ruffled their hair.

“Did you win, Daddy?” the boy asked excitedly.

“Yes, we did.” Anakin replied, a huge smile on his face.

“Yea!” The boy pounced on him again, almost knocking his father over. They laughed and wrestled for a few moments. Anakin looked up to his daughter’s pouting eyes directly in front of him.

“Do you want to wrestle with us?”

The girl nodded eagerly and Anakin scooped her up. The boy jumped on him again and the wrestling started again.

Padme’s eyes glistened with tears as she watched her family, the most important people in her entire world. Suddenly, her family’s play stopped and Anakin rose to greet her.

“Hello.” He smiled and softly stroked her cheek.

“Hello.”

“I didn’t think it was possible, but I do believe you’ve gotten more beautiful than when I saw you last. I’ve missed you so much.”

She smiled and stood up on her toes to kiss his lips softly.

“I’ve missed you too.”

“I love you, Padme Skywalker.”

“And I love you, Anakin Skywalker.”

His strong arms drew her closer to him and they kissed softly at first, then with hungry passion.

“Daddy! Would you stop kissing Mommy? I’m hungry!”

Anakin and Padme laughed at the children who tugged on their legs.

"It just never stops, does it love?"

"No," she smiled. "But that's the best part, isn't it?"

His laughter rang in her ears as they each picked up a child and walked in the house together.

Padme shot up in bed breathlessly. Her hands ran nervously through her long, curly hair as she remembered the strange dream she had just had. Anakin and their children. Her and Anakin, together and happy with two beautiful children. It was nothing short of disturbing, considering she was married to Anakin, from a certain point of view. But dreaming of children with him? It was too much. She wasn't ready for that yet, especially with the Anakin that was her husband.

Dejectedly, she laid back down and fell back into a restless, troubled sleep.

The next morning, she woke up in a cold sweat. Something didn't feel right and for the first time in two weeks, she wished her husband was there to comfort and hold her or at least was just there. But he hadn't returned from his mission of murder and duty yet. She sighed as she started to get out of bed. She certainly was pathetic, hating her husband one moment and wishing he was there the next. What was she going to do?

Suddenly, her stomach lurched and she lost control of her body as she ran to the refresher and emptied the contents of her stomach into the toilet. When her stomach had settled, she slid down to the floor and began to shake. No... not now... this wasn't happening. No, no, maybe she didn't have anything to worry about. Maybe it was just something she ate. That was it. She wasn't... well, she didn't want to think about it. There was nothing to worry about.

Vader sat at the controls of the Imperial starship that would bring him back to Corusant, his mission complete. He sighed, dreading having to be anywhere near his wife. It wasn't that he was afraid to face, he told himself, he just didn't want to have to deal with her. He already had enough to deal with. His thoughts drifted back to the conversation he had had with his Master a few hours before.

"You wasted a whole day with her family?" his Master had sneered in mock disgust. *"A whole day spent with the wife and company? She's making you weak, Lord Vader, I can feel it."*

"No, Master," he had replied earnestly. *"I'm just as strong as ever. And soon I will produce an heir."*

"Yes, but until that time comes, you must only allow her in your presence for the sole purpose of producing an heir. I can't have my second in command weakened by the company of a woman, especially that of a former Senator."

"Master, I assure you..."

"You've said enough, Lord Vader."

Vader ran his hands through his hair in frustration. It was longer than he normally kept it, but that was the least of his concerns. First the situation with his wife, then with his Master. What was next?

His thoughts drifted back to the events that had taken place the prior two weeks. She had been furious. And she had had every right to be. He shouldn't have made her watch, she should've stayed on the ship. Knowing what he was going to do would have been enough for her to realize that he had to do his duty. But he had been reckless, and had broken his promise to her. She had been hurt by his heartless actions, but then again, when did he ever have a heart? But these last few weeks, something was happening to him. Being in her presence again after all that time was... well, absolutely intoxicating. Maybe his Master was right, she was making him weak. Pathetic and weak. Yet he found himself liking that weakness and wanting more.

Despite everything that happened between them, despite their bitter arguing, despite the horrible things she had said to him, he couldn't stop himself from daydreaming of her soft lips against his. The way her body had felt against his on their wedding night. The way her eyes, so soft and tender, seemed to look into his very soul.

Vader sighed and stretched his arms over his head. He still had yet to decide how he was going to approach her once he returned to Corusant. True, his Master had instructed him to keep his distance, but they had to be on better terms if they were ever going... no, Padme was more than just a means to produce an heir. She deserved to be treated better than that. What was he going to do to get in her good graces again? Nothing he thought of seemed to be good enough, nothing seemed to be worthy of her. Perhaps the best approach was to attempt conversation and to attempt to apologize. That is, if she ever let him near her again.

"Lord Vader? We've landed on Corusant."

"Very good."

Vader sighed again. It was going to be a very interesting and long day.

Padme sat nervously at the edge of her bed. Over the last two hours, she had vomited four times and was anticipating a fifth any time now. Morning sickness, a tiny voice whispered to her. Even still, she tried to stay hopeful that it wasn't that all. Maybe she was just coming down with some illness that would go away in a few days. Or maybe eight or nine months.

She wasn't ready for this. She certainly didn't feel ready to be a mother, let alone the mother of the heir to the Empire. If she was pregnant, could she really raise the child of Lord Vader? Could she really allow her child to be trained as a Sith? Sighing sadly, she knew that if she was indeed pregnant, she wouldn't be given a choice.

Her thoughts drifted back to her disturbing dream the previous night. All four of them had been so happy and her and Anakin had seemed so in love. It unnerved her to think of loving the man that looked like Anakin Skywalker. She knew she did, but it was so painful to admit. Sometimes, she truly believed that her husband was Anakin, but then he changed split seconds later and was Vader again. The truth was, she was ready to be a mother. She was

ready to be the mother of the child of Anakin Skywalker, not the child of Lord Vader. But her fate lied with the latter, and Anakin Skywalker, the man she loved, was dead.

10. The Scientist and a Beautiful Disaster

Author's Note: Happy Valentine's Day everyone! In honor of this 'holiday', I decided to make this a Valentine-inspired chapter. Thanks again to everyone that's reviewed! Hope you enjoy!

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Ten

"Milady? Milady, please wake up!" Sabe whispered breathlessly, shaking a sleeping Padme.

"What, Sabe? What's wrong?"

"Milady, your husband's returned and he's on his way here right now!"

"What? No! I can't see him, I won't!" Padme cried in frustration.

"I know, I know. What do you want me to do?"

Padme took a couple of moments to consider every possible option. No matter what she did, he would find her eventually and she would have to face him. But not yet.

"I'll go in the refresher. When he comes to the door, just tell him I'm not feeling well and I'll call for him later."

"Milady, what if he doesn't take no for an answer?"

"If he comes in anyway, I'll simply stay in the refresher."

"I don't know if this is such a good idea..."

"Well, I can't hide anywhere else, can I? This is the best option we have right now."

Before anything further exchange could be made, a knock was heard from the door. Padme grabbed her robe and ran to her hiding spot while Sabe sprinted nervously to the door. She opened the door and had to keep her jaw from dropping at the Vader before her. He almost seemed nervous or guilty or afraid... whatever it was, she had never seen this from him before.

"Is Padme here? I need to speak with her."

"Yes, she's here. But she has instructed me to tell you that she is not feeling well and wishes for time to recover. She said she will call for you as soon as she is feeling better."

Vader's forehead crinkles in equal confusion and frustration. She wasn't really sick, that he knew. And he didn't blame her for not wanting to see him so soon. Or ever. But still, he wanted to see her. He hadn't even stopped to conference with his Master. He went directly to her chambers and she was rejecting him yet again. As much as he wanted to barge past Sabe and demand that his wife listen to what he had to say, he knew it would only make matters

worse for him. He sighed in frustration, knowing it would be a while before Padme called for him.

“Alright. Tell her I hope she recovers soon then.”

With that, Vader left, leaving a somewhat speechless Sabe. She had expected a fight, some sort of struggle of wills between Vader and her mistress. But he had simply taken her news calmly, although he seemed disappointed to not be able to see his wife.

A confused Sabe knocked on the refresher door.

“Milady, he’s gone now.”

Grateful for the grace period, Padme quickly opened the door but stopped short of actually leaving the refresher. Within moments, she was vomiting again.

“Milady?”

Padme slid to the floor, the last thing she wanted to do was tell anyone what she feared. But if she could tell anyone, it was Sabe.

“Sabe, I think I might be pregnant.”

Sabe’s jaw dropped open.

“Oh my...”

Vader threw his cloak onto his bed and sat down dejectedly. He had expected Padme to not want to see him. He also knew he couldn’t push her, though. He was at fault and he deserved to be slapped and called every horrible name in the book. His thoughts drifted back, yet again, to the events on Naboo two weeks ago. He had been callous and cruel to his wife and he knew it would be a long time before his wife ever spoke to him again.

He sighed, running his hand through his hair. How did this happen to him? When did he become such a horrible monster?

*Come up to meet you, tell you I’m sorry
You don’t know how lovely you are
I had to find you
Tell you I need you
Tell you I set you apart*

His shift from good to evil had been gradual. Every time the Council gave him a mission he didn’t agree with, every time Obi-Wan lectured him, he slid further towards the darkness.

*Tell me your secrets
And ask me you questions
Oh let’s go back to the start
Running in circles
Coming in tails
Heads are a science apart*

No Jedi could understand his desire for something more. And in truth, his intentions had been somewhat noble at first. It hadn't always been about power, it was about his mother. She had died and he been forced to watch, powerless to help her. That shouldn't have happened, no one should have to go through what he did. So he started looking for a way to prevent that from ever happening again, to stop people from dying, and that lead him to Palpatine. Palpatine understood and he had never really experienced that before. Yet, the only time he truly felt whole, completely understood, was with Padme. And now, it seemed as if even she didn't understand him.

*Nobody said it was easy
It's such a shame for us to part
Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be this hard
Oh take me back to the start*

He didn't blame her for not being able to understand, because sometimes, he didn't understand himself. Under Palpatine's orders, he carried out 'missions' that ended with the deaths of million, maybe even billions. Mass destruction and murder. In exchange for his soul, he had gotten a lifetime of tyranny and oppression. He enjoyed the power and the fear he invoked by his very presence, yet, he couldn't help but wonder what his life might have been like if he hadn't turned.

*I was just guessing
At numbers and figures
Pulling your puzzles apart
Questions of science
Science and progress
Do not speak as loud as my heart*

Maybe he could've gotten another chance with Padme, and would not have had to use force to make her be with him. If he could take anything back, besides his actions two weeks ago, it was the fact that he had made Padme be with him. He couldn't stop himself from wondering if she would leave him if she had the chance. If anyone could love him, it was her. He wanted her to love him, he wanted to love her back. But his Sith training barked back that love as impossible, that it only made you vulnerable.

*Tell me you love me
Come back and haunt me
Oh and I rush to the start
Running in circles
Chasing tails
And coming back as we are*

The day he found her, she had been so beautiful and even in her fear, she was beautiful. An angel. She was defiant and strong-willed and he loved that about her. She proved to him every day that he had met his match and he intended to rise to the challenge. His marriage to her was not something he took lightly; it meant more to him than production of an heir. But he couldn't admit what that was.

*Nobody said it was easy
Oh it's such a shame for us to part
Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be so hard*

Maybe someday she would love him. Maybe someday he would be able to forgive himself for all of the pain and destruction he had caused.

I'm going back to the start

"Milady? Did you just say what I think you said?"

"Yes, Sabe."

"Oh my... well, you need to go to a doctor then."

"No! I can't... I mean, it's only been a day. What if it really is just a bug? Maybe I'm just over-reacting."

"Maybe, but I still think you should see a doctor."

"I'll think about it, Sabe. Could you please give me a few minutes alone?"

Sabe nodded and quickly exited the room. Padme sighed, finally, she was alone. Alone with the thoughts that clouded her mind.

*He drowns in his dreams
An exquisite extreme, I know
He's as damned as he seems
And more heaven than a heart could hold
And if I tried to save him
My whole world could cave in
It just ain't right
It just ain't right*

Vader. Her husband. The father of her child. She closed her eyes sadly because deep down, she knew that she was pregnant. What was she going to do? She wanted to be happy, she wanted to shout from the roof tops that she was going to have the child of Anakin Skywalker, but that wasn't her husband. But when he held her, everything seemed to fade away, and all that remained was the love that she felt for him. She couldn't deny it, she loved him, she loved him for the man he once was, and she even found herself loving him now. His presence after so long played with her emotions and her good sense. She knew she shouldn't love him, but she did all the same.

*Oh, and I don't know
I don't know what he's after
But he's so beautiful
Such a beautiful disaster
And if I could hold on
Through the tears and the laughter*

*Would it be beautiful
Or just a beautiful disaster?*

As hopeless as it seemed, she knew that Anakin was there somewhere within him. She knew that she was the only one that could ever bring Anakin back, but it seemed impossible. Every good thing he did for her, he turned around and committed another horrible, unforgivable act. And she couldn't forgive him for what he did to her. Yet, she knew that he was being manipulated, at least, at first he was. Now, it seemed he was just as eager to murder and destroy as Palpatine was. And he was so powerful and so strong that it both amazed and frightened her at the same time.

*He's magic and myth
As strong as what I believe
A tragedy with
More damage than a soul should see
And do I try to change him?
So hard not to blame him
Hold on tight
Hold on tight*

He was broken and she so badly wanted to reach out to him. To help him change. But what if he didn't want to change? What if he laughed in her face and pushed her away? Where would that leave her? She would be miserable, lonely, defeated, and pregnant.

*I'm longing for love and the logical
But he's only happy hysterical
I'm waiting for some kind of miracle
Waited so long... so long*

If only she could transfer the way he was with her to everyone else in the universe. He was so gentle with her, almost loving. The way he kissed her, it was almost as if he loved her back. But that was more than she could hope for. Even more than she could dream about. Vader would never love her. He couldn't. She found herself in the same predicament she was in two years ago. Fighting against a code, and trying to decide what to do. This time, he was a Sith, not a Jedi. Neither one was supposed to love, yet, in spite of the Jedi Code, Anakin had loved her.

*He's soft to the touch
But frayed at the ends, he breaks
He's never enough
And still he's more than I can take*

Maybe, just maybe, there was a chance he could love her. He did once and love doesn't just fade away. Especially the frighteningly intense love Anakin had had for her. But Vader was under the influence of Palpatine. And Palpatine wasn't going to give him up without a fight.

*He's beautiful
Such a beautiful disaster
Beautiful, beautiful disaster
Beautiful disaster*

Author's Note: Ok, I know it wasn't all love and fluff, but it was a little romantic, right?

"The Scientist"— Coldplay

"Beautiful Disaster"— Kelly Clarkson

11. Two

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Eleven

Vader paced nervously around his room. He didn't know how much more of this he could take. It had been two days and Padme had yet to call for him. What was he supposed to do? Sit around like a naughty child and await punishment? Why did she always have to be so difficult? He was sorry and wanted to make it up to her, but she wasn't even giving him an opportunity to make amends for what he did.

Sometimes, he really wished he could use the Force to make her do what he wanted. But then again, that would defeat the purpose of asking for forgiveness if one had to be forced to forgive.

He sighed, running his hands through his hair. The suspense was really killing him.

"Lord Vader?" asked a timid storm trooper.

"What?" he barked back in annoyance.

"Lady Vader has asked to speak with you."

"Oh, well, thank you."

The storm trooper nodded and quickly exited the room.

Vader took a nervous breath and then headed for his wife's chambers.

Padme paced nervously around her room. Right then, she was sincerely regretting her decision to finally talk to her husband. She didn't even know where to begin with him, especially now that she was almost completely sure of her delicate condition. But she had at least decided not to tell him until she was completely sure. They had more important matters to resolve before they could talk about having a baby.

She jumped at the knock on the door, immediately thrown out of her current thoughts and flown into sudden despair and anxiety. He was here. And she had no way out now because she had called him to her.

Taking a deep breath for strength, she opened the door. She bit her lip anxiously as she allowed her eyes graze Vader's. He looked... well, like himself, but more solemn than she had ever seen him before. He almost looked... nervous and... guilty.

Vader attempted a smile towards her but the smile quickly faded when he recognized intolerance of any charms in her eyes. He swallowed and followed her to the sitting area of her chambers. Once they had sat down, an uncomfortable silence ensued. Finally, Vader broke the silence.

“Are you feeling better?”

Padme looked up, slightly surprised by his concern, and met sincere, soft cerulean eyes.

“I am, thank you.”

He nodded and another uncomfortable silence followed. Again, Vader broke the silence.

“I’m sorry.”

Padme looked up, surprised and confused at his sudden apology so rapidly.

“What?”

“I’m sorry.”

“Oh I see, you think you can just say you’re sorry and everything will be fine?”

“Padme, I...”

“No, you listen to me. What you did was... awful and horrible and inhuman and coldhearted and unforgivable! You can’t possibly expect me to forgive you just because you apologized!”

Vader grimaced. He had expected this.

“You don’t deserve forgiveness,” she continued. “You deserve to be loathed and despised and spit on and beaten and...”

Vader swallowed nervously. He knew this wasn’t going to be easy.

“Padme, what can I do? I’ll do anything you ask, but please, just don’t push me away. I just want everything to be alright between us.”

Padme froze for a split second. Did he really mean that or was he just saying what she wanted to hear?

“I don’t know.”

“Then how can I make this better if you won’t even give me a chance?”

“You don’t deserve to be given a chance. Why should I give you a chance when you’ve never done that for anyone else in your entire life?”

“Yes I did. I gave you a chance once.”

Padme’s blood ran cold. Where was he going with this? She wasn’t about to be swayed easily. Her convictions were too strong to just back down, especially when he had hurt her so much.

“I don’t understand.”

“I put everything on the table, Padme. I told you everything that I was going through and that was a huge risk. The chance I took didn’t pay off and I didn’t think I would ever see you again. After that, I vowed never to allow myself to be so vulnerable again, to never let my guard down. But you, you’re different. You take risks and follow your instincts. That’s what made you such an effective politician. You follow your gut and... Padme? Are you alright?”

Padme's eyes closed involuntarily as a wave of nausea hit her stomach. Oh no... not now...

She pushed past him and ran straight for the refresher, only stopping to empty the contents of her stomach into the toilet.

When the violent vomiting finally ceased, she slid to the floor, trying to catch her breath again. When she dared to look up, her tired chocolate eyes met his worried cerulean ones. Vader stood in the doorway, his shock and concern evident on his face.

"Padme, I thought you said you were feeling better."

"It comes and goes."

His face crinkled in confusion.

"Have you seen a doctor yet?"

"No, but I..."

"Come on, let's go see one then."

She paused for a moment, almost touched by his gentle sincerity. Either she told him now or he'd have to hear it from the doctor.

"I think I'm pregnant."

Vader's jaw dropped open and his knees threatened to give out underneath him. Oh my gods...

"What... pregnant? Are you... are you sure?"

"It's been going on for the past few days and I missed my cycle."

He nodded in understanding. He took a cautious step towards her.

"Can I... I mean I can tell if you are or not..."

She surprised herself by nodding her consent and he slowly closed the gap between them. He reached out with cautious hands and gently placed one hand on her stomach, the other resting lightly on the small of her back.

Both closed their eyes at the exact same moment. She could feel his presence in her belly, stroking and feeling. It was a surprisingly calm and pleasant sensation and Padme sighed softly.

Suddenly, Vader's eyes shot open and his mouth opened slightly.

"There's two."

"What did you say?"

"There's two, Padme. A boy and a girl."

They gazed at each other for a moment, each one trying to digest the new information. Twins? Vader's face broke out into a wide grin and couldn't stop himself from taking his wife in his arms.

“Padme,” he whispered into her hair. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Neither do I.” She replied softly.

He smiled gently and then released her slightly so that he could look in her eyes.

“Thank you.”

Padme froze, desperately hoping she had heard him correctly. Then without thought, she rushed back into his arms and pressed her lips firmly against his. His arms closed around her, pulling her to him tightly as their passion and joy lifted them. When their lips finally parted, they looked into each other’s smiling faces and he kissed her softly one more time.

“I can’t even begin to tell you how happy this makes me.”

She smiled, her eyes watering with tears.

“That’s good.”

“This is wonderful! Two, Padme? I can’t believe it... you’re happy, right?”

“Of course,” she said laughing through her tears. “I’m not crying because I’m sad. This is one of the best moments of my life.”

They kissed yet again and Vader reluctantly released her from his arms.

“Padme, I know this is asking a lot, but do you think that maybe we could put our differences aside, at least for now?”

Padme sighed softly. Maybe she could let everything go for now. After all, she was having twins and she shouldn’t feel anything but absolute joy.

“I suppose it would be best. Besides, we wouldn’t want to endanger our children by constantly raising my stress level, right?”

He smiled at the words ‘our children’ and nodded in agreement.

“I promise you, Padme, I’m going to make everything up to you. This is the most wonderful news and I’m going to do everything I can to make sure that you’re happy and comfortable.”

She laughed good-naturedly, and reached up to run her hand through his hair. When he talked to her like that, she could almost forget...

“I don’t doubt that for a second.”

They shared a light-hearted laugh and then, Vader closed the distance between them and drew her to him once more, enveloping her in his strong arms and his passionate kiss.

12. Close Call

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Twelve

The enormous throne room seemed to have a yellow glow. It was frighteningly dark and the air was thick from the combination of evil and tension. There were no windows, and the dim light of black candles sent shadows creeping against every wall. A large black throne sat at the end of the room, with a narrow carpet leading from the throne to the other side of the room. In that throne, sat Chancellor Palpatine, his Sith eyes closed in meditation. Today was the day he would meet the heir to his Empire.

“Master?”

The Emperor’s eyes shot open and immediately focused on the dark form of his apprentice. Next to him, was the much smaller, petite form of his wife.

“Lord Vader.”

“I have brought my wife like you requested.”

The Emperor swiftly rose from his throne and slithered towards the couple until he was face to face with Lady Vader. His hands shot out and he made massage-like gestures on her stomach, sending his senses into the folds of her stomach, searching for his heir.

Padme felt vomit rise in her throat as the Emperor’s assault on her continued and she leaned slightly towards her husband for support. Suddenly, his hands removed themselves from her stomach and she felt herself breathe again.

“Two heirs, Lord Vader. You were correct. Have your wife taken back to her chamber. I wish to speak to you alone.”

“Yes, my Master.”

After Padme had left, Vader kneeled before his Master.

“Lord Vader, we have a serious matter we must discuss.”

“Of course, Master.”

“Two heirs were not in the plan. I understand, of course, that these matters cannot be helped or controlled, yet, two heirs are very dangerous. There must only be one. The male is stronger in the Force of the two, so you must destroy the female and preserve the male.”

Vader froze and desperately tried to keep his jaw from dropping.

“That is an order, Lord Vader.”

“But, Master... you can’t ask me to destroy my own flesh.”

“It is only a female, and if you won’t, then I will. Either way is irrelevant to me, as long as there is only one heir in the end. And if you sway on this matter at all, Lord Vader, it will only be further proof to me that your wife is weakening you and I will have to act on that decisively.”

Vader nodded quickly, bowed, then retreated to his chambers in a furious pace.

He threw himself onto his bed and angrily pounded his fists into his pillow. This could not be happening. Why hadn’t he seen this coming? He would have been able to prepare, to think of some other solution. But now it was too late. Or was it? There had to be another way, even if it meant his Master’s rage. He could take any punishment his Master inflicted on him, just as long as his family was safe. There had to be something that would save his daughter and that his Master would find satisfactory. There had to be something...

Suddenly, Vader sprung to his feet and sprinted towards the throne room, his black cloak flying wildly out behind him. He halted his sprint right before the doors opened to the throne room.

“Lord Vader? Completed your orders so soon?”

“No, Master. I believe that destroying the female is the wrong course of action.”

“Oh really? Please explain.”

“Since she is not as force-sensitive as the male, she will not be trained as a Sith. However, if something should happen to the male, she could then be trained as a Sith, no matter her age. She could then take the male’s place as heir.”

The Emperor narrowed his eyes at Vader’s suggestion, contemplating all he had said.

“You firmly believe this is the best course?”

“Yes, my Master. I believe it would be wise to have a replacement, in case a tragedy should befall the true heir to your Empire.”

“Perhaps you’re right about this. And what will be done with the female, then?”

“She will be raised as a handmaiden.”

“With your wife, the fervent politician?”

“My wife is no longer in politics, Master. Our marriage signified her allegiance to the Empire. And if there is any reason to suspect the female, I will have her killed.”

The Emperor simply nodded in approval.

“Very well. But if this backfires, Lord Vader, it will be entirely your responsibility to deal with the repercussions.”

“Of course, Master.”

Vader bowed once again and headed for Padme’s chambers. Too close for comfort...

He opened the door and found his wife sleeping on what was now their bed. He smiled to himself and crept as silently as he could towards the bed. He slowly eased himself on the bed

next to her and winced when she stirred next to him. She tiredly turned over, rubbing her eyes, and when her eyes focused on her husband, her beautiful face broke into a smile.

“Hey.”

He smiled and pushed her long, chocolate hair out of her eyes.

“Did you have a good nap?”

“Yes. What did Palpatine want to speak with you about?”

“Nothing you need to be worried about.”

“Good.”

She snuggled closer to him as his hands tangled in her hair. After a few moments, her breath slowed and he could tell she was asleep. He sighed deeply, contemplating the day’s events. He had almost lost his daughter, and she wasn’t even born yet. Hopefully, everything would work out the way he had planned it out and his daughter would be safe and his Master would be satisfied.

He looked down at Padme’s sleeping form and smiled softly. She would never have to know just how close they had come. Yet, somehow... it had seemed too easy. His Master had simply relented and that was highly unusual. For now, he would just have to trust his Master. He would have to rely on his ability to protect his family, even if it meant defying his Master, because now, he had more important responsibilities.

13. Into The Night

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Thirteen

Padme's eyes fluttered open from a deep sleep. She smiled when she saw her husband's sleeping face next to hers. She leaned over and softly kissed his lips, then cuddled closer to him. He responded, even in his sleep, and pulled her even closer to him. She closed her eyes again and smiled as her very swollen stomach pressed against his.

It had already been eight months and everything was going exactly as it should. She was healthy, the children were healthy, and her husband was wonderful. Not a day went by when he didn't find some way to make her day. The day before, he had surprised her by showing her their children's nursery. It had already been decorated, equipped with two rocking chairs, two cribs, and diapers and toys galore. It was the best present she had ever received and the best part of all was that he had done it for her.

She had been able to forgive him for what he did to her a long time ago. There was no use in continuing to argue with him over it, and besides, he was changing. Even if the change was slight and only when they were alone, he was still changing and that overjoyed her. Anakin was in there somewhere...

Suddenly, her husband's arms squeezed around her tightly, and he laughed when he felt her stomach press against him even harder.

"I love that." He whispered in her ear.

"I know you do." She beamed back at him.

He pressed her to him again and locked her in a passionate kiss. In spite of the building passion, she lightly pushed him away.

"Come on, you know we can't do that. Remember what the doctor said?"

"Yeah, I remember." He replied, with a disappointed look on his face.

"But yet, you keep trying!" She laughed.

"Well, you know what they say: if at first you don't succeed..."

She threw the pillow at him and he knocked it away using the Force. Suddenly, another pillow hit Padme in the back of the head.

"Oww! That's not fair, you're cheating!" She laughed.

"Oh, ok. I'll give you a free shot."

Immediately, he was pelted with a pillow. He shot out of bed and took off for the refresher, yelling: "I'm out of here! You're turning hostile!"

She laughed and laid back down in bed. Several minutes later, Vader came out of the refresher and sat next to her on the bed.

“Padme, there’s something I have to tell you.”

She looked at him expectantly, suddenly worried about what he had to tell her.

“I have to leave tomorrow. There’s a rebellion starting on Camarieon, and the Emperor wants me to lead the opposition to stop it.”

“What? But the children could be here anytime... you can’t leave me now.”

Tears began to spill down her cheeks, breaking his heart in two. He gathered her up in his arms and hugged her to him tightly.

“It’s ok, it’s ok. Everything’s going to be fine. Look, Padme... Padme, look at me. If the babies start coming while I’m gone, Sabe will let me know and I’ll find a way to get back to you as soon as I can. Do you think I would really miss the birth of my children? Padme, I promise, if anything happens, I’ll find a way to come back.”

He wiped the tears from her cheeks as she nodded.

“Just promise me that you’ll come back in one piece.”

He laughed softly and then kissed her.

“I promise. I’ll come back in one piece.”

He kissed her again and they held each other for what seemed like ages. But before Padme knew it, her husband had to leave and she was alone.

She shifted in bed, uncomfortable with the empty space next to her. She smiled to herself as she felt her children move inside her as her hand rested on top of her stomach. She sighed and turned over on her side. Where was he? What was he doing? Was he thinking about her and the children?

Suddenly, she was grabbed from behind and a hand was clamped around her mouth before she could scream. She felt herself being picked up and then her instincts kicked in and she kicked and bit and struggled with all her might.

“No, Padme. Don’t struggle with us! Come on!”

She continued to fight and managed to get out of her captor’s arms. She sprinted for the door, screaming for help, but found that the guards outside her door were already dead.

“No! Please! Somebody help me!” She screamed in vain.

She was grabbed from behind again and she spun around to look her captor in the eye and what she saw made her blood run cold.

She was able to utter only one word before she fainted in his arms: “Obi-Wan.”

14. Gone

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Fourteen

Vader sat in his chambers on the transport, completely buried in paperwork. He didn't mind, though, because it kept his mind off of his wife and their unborn children. He had only been gone for two days and he was already going out of his mind with worry. And he missed her. Suddenly, a cold shiver ran down his spine. Something was wrong. Something happened...

"Lord Vader, I have some bad news."

Vader stood up immediately and walked towards the storm trooper, and looked at him expectantly.

"Your wife has been kidnapped."

His blood froze in his veins and the papers in his hand flew to the ground. His knees felt weak and he had to sit down.

"What happened?"

"Rebels, milord. They came in the middle of the night, shot the guards, and took her."

"Are there any leads yet?"

"We managed to get the signal from the ship they were on. We still have to track it. What are your orders, sir?"

Vader knew what he wanted to do, but, what his Master wanted him to do could be something completely different.

"I must speak with the Emperor first, then I'll give my orders. Until then, stay on course."

The storm trooper nodded and left the room. The second Vader was alone, his shoulders began to heave and his breath came in short gasps. Within moments, he angrily pushed all the papers off his desk and flipped his chair over. He sank to the ground, whispering: "Oh God, Padme, oh God, Padme..."

Padme groggily opened her eyes and immediately shot up in bed, the events of the previous night flooding back to her. Her hands flew to her middle and she stroked her stomach lightly, trying to soothe her children's kicking.

Then the door opened and a hooded man entered her room.

"Padme?" The man said, removing his hood to reveal himself.

“Obi-Wan, what’s going on? Where am I here?”

“We’ve worked very hard to get you here.”

“Who else is here?”

Another form entered the room and closed the door tightly. He turned around to reveal himself to Padme. It was Bail Organa.

“Bail?”

“Padme, I’m so glad you’re safe.”

Bail rushed towards her and quickly embraced his old friend. When he realized the condition she was in, he immediately released her.

“Oh Padme, I’m sorry, I didn’t know you were...”

“Well I am, Bail and there’s nothing anyone can do to change that.”

“You’re right, I’m truly sorry.”

Padme ignored his last comment and allowed him to lead her to a chair. Bail and Obi-Wan sat down next to her.

“Why did you take me from my home?”

Bail and Obi-Wan exchanged a glance then looked back at her. Several moments passed without an answer to Padme’s question and then, finally, Obi-Wan broke the silence.

“We had to rescue you, Padme. We couldn’t let you be his prisoner like that. You deserve better than that. And now, given you’re current condition, you’re in even greater danger.”

“What do you mean, Obi-Wan?”

“Once you give birth, Vader and the Emperor will no longer have any need for you. In a few weeks, you might be dead, Padme.”

She gasped and her hand immediately flew to her middle. She began to shake her head vigorously.

“No, no, no. You’re wrong. You don’t know what you’re talking about. He wouldn’t let that happen. He said he’d never let anything happen to me.”

Obi-Wan left his chair and knelt down by her.

“I’m sure he’s made many promises to you, Padme. But you can’t trust him. And you certainly can’t depend on him because the Emperor has an iron-tight grip on him. I know that he’s your husband and that you want to trust him, but you can’t, Padme. You just can’t.”

“Why can’t I?” She asked through her tears.

“Because he’s a killer. And the Emperor’s orders are concrete. I can’t even begin to understand what you’ve went through this past year. But you’re safe now...”

“You don’t know what you’re saying, Obi-Wan. Besides, he’s going to find me. Especially now that I’m pregnant with his children, he’s not going to sleep until I’m back with him.”

“Wait... children? You’re having twins?”

“Yes.”

Obi-Wan stroked his beard thoughtfully and looked at Bail.

“And the Emperor is allowing two possible heirs to exist?”

“Yes. Anakin-I mean Vader... he never said anything about two heirs being a problem.”

Obi-Wan’s eyebrows rose skeptically and he leaned back in deep contemplation of everything she had just regretfully revealed. This was worse than he thought it would be. He had known that she was pregnant and due to give birth at anytime... but he hadn’t ever considered in a million years that Padme actually had feelings for his former padawan. He had a bad feeling about this.

“What are your wishes, Master?”

“Stay where you are. The investigators should know where the rebel transport came from any time know. Then you can change your course as soon as you know. Remember, Lord Vader, those heirs are the key to this Empire. You must get them back.”

“I will, Master. I will stop at nothing to get them back.”

“Very good, Lord Vader.”

Once his Master’s image faded, Vader took off for the main chambers of his ship.

“Is there any word yet?”

“No, milord. But we should be hearing anytime.”

“Alert me immediately when you find out.”

“Certainly, sir.”

Vader turned on his heel and retreated back to his own chambers. He sighed in frustration and threw himself dejectedly onto his bed. He could only guess where the rebels had taken her. If anyone had harmed a hair on her head... he knew he wouldn’t be able to restrain himself from ripping them apart. This was too much for him to handle... he didn’t know how to deal with all of the feelings rushing through him. His training had never covered anything like this. But it was Padme... and he was going to do anything and everything in his power to get her back. He wouldn’t eat, he wouldn’t sleep until she was back where she belonged.

“Obi-Wan, I still don’t understand... you can’t possibly believe that he won’t come for me, that he won’t attempt to get his children back?”

“I know, I know, Padme. We’re going to give you the best protection we possibly can. We’re going to do everything in our power to keep you from Vader.”

“But, you don’t understand...”

“Padme, you really should rest. You could give birth at any time. Come on, I’ll help you lay down.”

Padme simply nodded and let him assist her. This wasn’t happening, this wasn’t happening. Not now, when their children could come at any time. He had to be there, he had to come for her. She knew he would come to get his children, but what about her? Would he do what Obi-Wan said he would? Would he discard her the moment the children were born? She had been so sure that Anakin was within him somewhere, but everything Obi-Wan had said was plausible. Vader was a killer and the Emperor was his puppeteer. Maybe she was too gullible, maybe he had been lying to her the entire time... but then again, his kisses didn’t lie. The way he held her didn’t lie. She knew that he wouldn’t rest and he wouldn’t sleep until he had found her. But whatever happened after he came for her was out of her hands and maybe even out of her husband’s hands as well.

15. Discoveries

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Fifteen

Padme's eyes fluttered open. She looked around the room and sighed. It wasn't a nightmare after all, she was still a captive. She was still separated from her husband. But her thoughts were interrupted when Obi-Wan entered her room.

"Ah, you're finally awake."

Padme sat up and instinctively placed a hand on her bulging abdomen. She smiled softly when she noticed the tray of food he placed in front of her.

"You need to eat, Padme."

"I know. I will."

"I'll also have a doctor examine you just to make sure you and the children are alright."

"Thank you."

There were several awkward moments of silence while Obi-Wan carefully observed Padme. Finally, it was Padme that broke the silence.

"What's going to happen when he finds me?"

Obi-Wan sighed deeply.

"Padme, it is our hope that he doesn't find you."

"But he will. No matter how long it takes, he will."

Obi-Wan sighed again.

"Padme, do you mind if I ask you some questions? About Vader?"

She looked at him curiously before nodding her head.

"Does he treat you well?"

"Yes. He has never harmed me. In fact, after I found out that I was pregnant, he became very kind to me."

Obi-Wan's eyes narrowed at her last statement, yet he chose to ignore the issue for now.

"And has he mentioned anything about his plans for the children?"

"Just what we already knew. My son will be the sole heir."

"Yes, but what of your daughter?"

"I don't know. He's never really said."

"I see."

"Obi-Wan, just listen to me. I've had enough of this. You had no right to kidnap me from me home, especially in my condition. You endangered my children and I can not forgive you for that. I want you to take me home."

"Padme, I can't do that—"

"Yes you can! Please, just take me back!"

"I can't."

Tears spilt down her cheeks and she clung onto to his arm, shaking him and pleading with him.

"Please," she cried. "I just want to be with him. Take me home."

Obi-Wan froze at her words. This was not good.

"Padme, you can't go back to him. I won't let you."

"Why? All I want is just to go home."

"Yes, home to him. So he can murder both you and your daughter after you give birth. I can't let that happen to you, I won't. You don't deserve this, Padme. No one should have to live life as Vader's slave."

"I'm not his slave. He treats me like I'm his wife, Obi-Wan. He respects me, he listens to me, and sometimes, I think he might even love me. You don't understand us, no one does. I love him, Obi-Wan. I love him and I want to go back to him. If you don't, I'll find a way to let him know where I am and he'll come for me."

Obi-Wan was stunned. She had just openly admitted her love for Vader. Things were certainly taking a turn for the worse. Although he truly believed that Vader would kill her and her daughter once she gave birth, he knew that Padme was telling him the truth. Maybe somewhere it was possible that Vader loved her as well, but he was positive that any feelings he had towards his wife were overshadowed by his loyalty to the Emperor.

Vader paced anxiously in his chambers. What was taking so god damned long? He should be on his way to his wife now, he should know where she was, if she was alright. He closed his eyes. He could feel her, not where she was, but feel her emotions. She was upset, maybe even crying. Something was wrong. He knew he had to find her now more than ever.

"Lord Vader, we've found the rebels! They've taken her to Alderaan."

Vader spun around.

"Alderaan?"

He stared at the now frightened storm trooper.

"Bail Organa," he muttered under his breath. "I should have known."

Vader turned his attention back to the trembling storm trooper.

“Change course to Alderaan.”

After his messenger had left, Vader turned his attention to the large window in his chambers. He gazed out into the darkness and closed his eyes, reaching out with the Force. He could feel her presence again. She had calmed down now and that made him calmer. *I'm coming, Padme. Don't worry, I'll be there soon.*

Padme's eyes shot open. She felt his presence. She didn't know how, but it was there. Soothing her and calming her. She closed her eyes as he spoke to her and smiled softly. He was coming.

16. Lost and Found

Author's Note: I can't believe how many reviews I've gotten! It just blows my mind at how many people like this story! Thanks to everyone who has reviewed and keeps reviewing. Padawan Sydney Bristow, FlamablePajamies, Shawn, Jelp, Shadow131, tensixtythree, REV042175, Relyan, The End, Tiggs, LVB, Gionareth— you guys were great from the very beginning and you still are! I also want to thank Martina for writing me that awesome review. I knew exactly what you were saying and I'm glad you love my story! Thanks again everyone... and keep the reviews coming!

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Sixteen

The ship descended into the atmosphere of the planet Alderaan. Vader sat in the cockpit, his eyes intensely watching the space between him and the ground. Only one thought ran through his mind as he drew closer to Alderaan: Bail Organa was as good as dead.

When the ship finally touched the ground, he immediately took off for the exit, headed for the small house that his investigators had located. It was only a matter of time now.

Bail Organa paced around the dimly lit room in a frenzy.

"We can't keep her here much longer, Obi-Wan."

"I know, just relax..."

"I can't relax! How can you be so calm when you and I both know that it's only a matter of time before Vader's minions find out where we are. We need to move quickly."

"We can't move her. If we do, the stress could induce labor."

"I'd rather have her go into labor now, and get her the hell out of here!"

"Bail, I told you to relax. We still need to figure out what we're going to do with the children. I still think it would be best to separate them. Two heirs are a threat and he knows it. The Emperor isn't going to allow the daughter or Padme to live long after the birth. And we can't let him have the son."

"I know, I know. But we can't stay here! Obi-Wan! Look at me!"

But Obi-Wan's attention was focused elsewhere, for a livid Padme was now standing in the doorway.

"You're going to take one of my children away from me?"

"Now, Padme—"

"No, Obi-Wan, I won't allow this! You can't do this! If I can't get back to my husband, at least let me have both of my children!"

"It's too dangerous. They need to be separated and we need to keep you in hiding."

“Who’s the slave now, Obi-Wan? You’re no better than the Emperor. Trying to control everything! I won’t let you control my life and the lives of my innocent children!”

“I’m trying to keep them innocent, Padme!”

She took a step back, stunned at his outburst.

“They won’t be innocent for long when Vader gets a hold of them, especially your son. He’ll turn into a miniature Vader, is that what you want?”

Padme took another step back. He was right. She had tried so hard not to think of her son’s Sith training, because she knew that it was inevitable. As much as she wanted a complete family, she knew that her children would be better off if they were hidden from their father. Maybe she could find a way to keep her children safe from the Emperor and still be with her husband...

“Obi-Wan?”

He looked at her solemnly, giving her his full attention.

“Separate them. Hide them as best as you can. Take them somewhere he’ll never be able to find them.”

He nodded, relief shining in his eyes.

“Then let me go back to my husband.”

His mouth opened slightly, the relief replaced by shock and horror.

“Padme, if you go back without the children, there will be no reason to keep you alive.”

“I can’t stay with my children. I can feel his presence everywhere. He would find me, then he would find the children. If I go back without them, they’ll be safe.”

“Yes, but...”

“I can accept death, if that is my fate. And if my death means my children’s safety, then I surrender. I would rather die than allow my children to fall into the hands of the Emperor.”

Obi-Wan nodded, knowing full well that he wouldn’t be able to sway her decision. Padme was a strong woman, and he couldn’t deny her wishes.

Suddenly, the door burst open and several storm troopers entered the room. Then a dark figure entered the room, his black cloak flying out behind him as he ran breathlessly in the room, pushing aside the storm troopers. His eyes immediately rested on Padme and he felt a relief creep through him. But then his eyes flicked to her captor and they narrowed with malicious ice.

“Obi-Wan.”

His former Master nodded to him and in a flash, two light sabers were ignited. Just as Vader was ready to pounce, he heard a scream.

“No! Don’t!” Padme screamed, stepping in between them.

“Padme get out of the way!” Vader grunted.

“He meant me no harm. He didn’t hurt me. Let him go!”

“Let him go? No.”

“Please, don’t hurt him.”

Vader looked at her pleading eyes, unable to comprehend her sympathy for his former Master. Yet, something inside him was begging him to listen to her.

“Please, let him go. He was just trying to help.”

“Help you?”

“Yes,” Obi-Wan cut in. “I was trying to save her and her children from you and your Master.”

“They don’t need saving.” Vader charged back furiously.

“You and I both know what’s going to happen when she gives birth.”

Vader clenched his light saber tightly, still unable to decide what to do. He knew he should strike Obi-Wan down immediately, but Padme’s pleading eyes were stopping him.

“Ohhh!” Padme cried out.

The confrontation forgotten for the moment, Vader turned immediately to his wife and she collapsed in his arms.

“The children are coming! Ohh, it hurts! Get me out of here now!”

Vader looked from his wife to Obi-Wan. His decision was made in a split second. As he ran out the door with Padme in his arms, he yelled to a storm trooper: “Bring him back to the ship and anyone else you can find!”

He rushed back to the ship and quickly laid Padme down. She was panting now and grasped his shirt tightly.

“It hurts so much!”

“The medic is on his way... don’t worry... I’m here... I’m here Padme.”

He smiled reassuring at her and she managed to smile back as she squeezed his hand tightly.

“I knew you would find me.”

He smiled and kissed her forehead lightly.

“I know.”

17. Births

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Seventeen

The ship was in a frenzy. Storm troopers ran around trying to heed Vader's instructions with the prisoner. Nothing was still, everything was in motion. Complete chaos had broken out on the ship. And above all this, screams of pain could be heard.

"Ooohhh! Get them out of me! Oohhhh!" Padme screamed.

Vader was rushing back from Padme's room to outside to attempt to control the chaos. Padme grasped in the air for him to come back to her every time he stepped out and he was only able to leave for minutes at a time. The next time he left, Padme strained to hear what was going on outside.

"What? You let him get away? Well, where there any other prisoners?"

"We were able to capture Bail Organa. I'm so sorry milord, the Jedi jumped out the window before we could get to him."

"I don't care what he did before you could get to him. You should have gotten to him *before* he jumped out the window! Now, keep Organa in the security quarters until I have a chance to question him."

The shaking storm trooper nodded and quickly left to follow Vader's orders. Vader's ice blue eyes watched him leave and then his expression shifted from angry to concern when he heard Padme cry out again.

"Oh God! It hurts! When can I push?"

Vader immediately re-entered her room and took her hand. He looked expectantly at the doctor, who nodded his head.

"Now would be as good a time as any to start pushing. Alright, Padme, when the next contraction comes, I want you to push."

She nodded wearily, already worn out from the previous contractions. Her mind wildly wandered from everything to her husband to how in the hell was she going to push out two babies?

Her hand gripped Vader's tightly as she felt the next contraction. She cried out as she started pushing at the unbelievable pain. It seemed to go on forever until by some miracle, she heard a baby's cry.

"Lord Vader, you have a son."

The doctor started to hand Vader his son, but he quickly shook his head, motioning that Padme should hold him first. He watched in awe as mother and son gazed at each other for the first time. It was an unbelievable feeling to see his son for the first time. He was beautiful

and reminded him of the boy he once was. Vader's thoughts were interrupted when Padme cried out again and quickly handed her son back to the doctor. She gripped her still swollen stomach and nodded to the doctor.

"Let's get this over with."

Vader chuckled at her but his smile quickly faded when she shot him a deadly look.

"What are you smiling about? This is all your fault anyway. You are never touching me again." She grunted while pointing a slender finger in his direction.

Vader gulped and look helplessly at the doctor.

"She doesn't know what she's saying. It's just the pain talking." The doctor laughed.

"Oh yes, I do-ooooohhh, our daughter's coming!"

And so the process began again and then by some other miracle, Padme's weary face lit up at the cries that echoed through the room. Both of her children were crying. Tears of happiness and relief streamed down her face as the doctor handed her daughter to her. She grasped the little girl's hand and kissed her lightly on the forehead. Then she looked over at her husband, who was watching her with joy, and handed their daughter carefully to him.

Vader looked into the deep brown eyes of his daughter and couldn't help but smile. She looked exactly like Padme. As he watched his little girl, he realized that it truly was a miracle that she was in his arms. She would never know how close she had come to not existing and as he looked down at her, he knew he would always protect her, even die for her.

He gazed over at Padme's sleeping form and lightly kissed her forehead.

"Thank you." He whispered into her hair. He stood upright and walked over to look down at his sleeping son. He smiled and reached out to touch his head. When a knock was heard on the door, he reluctantly drew himself away to answer the door.

"Milord, when are you planning on questioning the prisoner?"

Vader's eyes darkened and he nodded.

"I'll be there in a minute."

The storm trooper nodded and left to return to the security chambers. Vader softly shut the door, trying not to wake his family. He lightly kissed his daughter, son, and then his wife before leaving to find some answers.

He opened the door to the security chambers and his eyes iced over when they focused on one of the men who had kidnapped his wife. He took a step forward and his prisoner's eyes never left his.

"Organa." He said calmly.

"Vader." Bail replied equally calm.

"I'm sure you'd love to know that Padme has given birth to two healthy children."

Bail nodded.

"I also want you to know that you're as good as dead. If you don't tell me what I want to know, I will make sure that every member of your family suffers unimaginable torture."

Vader and Bail stared at each other for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, Bail sighed in surrender.

"Alright, I'll tell you everything."

Vader smiled. "Excellent choice."

"The plan was to hide Padme and the children after they were born."

"Why?"

"Isn't it obvious? We wanted to save her and her children from you and your Master."

Vader's fists clenched involuntarily. He tried to tell himself that pummeling Organa now would not get him the answers he needed.

"She agreed that the children should be hidden from you. She also begged to be taken back to you."

Vader's eyes narrowed.

"You're lying."

"Why would I lie? Like you said, I'm already dead and if I do lie, my family will suffer for it. I'm telling the truth whether you like it or not. She told Obi-Wan to separate them and do whatever necessary to keep the children from you."

Vader's eyes closed briefly, then flew open. She was planning on taking away his children. She was going to come back to him, but she was going to hide his children from him.

"Do you have any idea where Kenobi might be now?"

Bail shook his head. "No, your guess is as good as mine. He always contacted me, I never knew exactly where he was or where he was going to be next."

Vader nodded and he chewed on his upper lip in thought.

"Alright."

With that, Vader turned on his heel and left the room. As he left, he ordered the guards: "You can take care of him now. I've got everything I need."

He went immediately to his own chambers, disturbed by everything he had learned from Organa. She agreed with his former Master? She didn't want him to be with his children? She was going to hide them from him? Was that still her plan?

He shook his head, trying in vain to clear his mind and figure out exactly what was going on. There was something he couldn't quite put his finger on, something he didn't know. And he was determined to find out what that was.

He crept into Padme's room and found himself smiling at what he saw. Padme had both their children cradled in her arms and was actually feeding their son. He felt a familiar flutter in his stomach, but now it was not only directed towards his beautiful wife, but to their

children as well. But his heart clenched in disappointment because not everything was as it seemed with that picture perfect image. He needed answers from her now.

“Padme?”

She looked up and her face lit up at the sight of him. He quickly returned the smile and took each child from her and laid them gently in their cribs.

“How are you feeling, Padme?”

“I feel better after getting some rest. Thank you for asking.” She smiled. She reached out and took his hand gently.

He squeezed her hand, not sure where to even begin. But right now, with the way she was looking at him, with their sleeping angels in their cribs, he didn’t want to do anything but hold her and kiss her and tell her... but he had to find out.

“We need to talk about what happened when you were kidnapped.”

She nodded and he continued.

“Organa told me everything that happened. He also said that you were planning on having our children separated. Can you explain that to me?” He asked, surprising himself by how gentle his voice was.

Padme’s face distorted in both shock and pain. She hadn’t considered the fact that what happened while she was with Obi-Wan and Bail would come back and haunt her.

“I didn’t want them to be trained as Siths. I wanted to come back to you, but I knew our children would be safer if they were hidden from the Emperor.”

Vader sighed, fighting an inner struggle he couldn’t explain.

“Don’t you see what that means? You plotted with the rebels to keep my heirs away from me! You didn’t want me anywhere near my own children! How could you think they wouldn’t be safe with me? Tell me, Padme. I have to know.”

“It’s not just you. It was the Emperor. Obi-Wan said that it was suspicious that the Emperor would allow two heirs. What if he tries to kill our daughter? I would rather die than let that happen!”

“Padme, that’s not going to happen. I spoke with my Master about that and we both agreed that it’s best if the daughter acts as a back-up in case anything should happen to our son. Nothing is going to happen to her. I made sure that she’s going to be safe.”

His mouth shut immediately after he realized what he had just revealed to her while Padme’s dropped open.

“You what?”

Vader ran his hand nervously through his hair, unsure how to handle this new development in his overwhelming crisis.

“I... ah...”

“He was going to kill our daughter, wasn’t he?”

Vader swallowed and shocked himself by nodding.

“And you talked him out of it?”

He nodded again.

She started up at him, unable to completely comprehend the entire situation. The Emperor was going to kill their daughter and her husband had stopped it from happening. The serial killer had a heart after all. Her heart started thumping wildly in her chest. In his own way, he was telling her he loved their children. Could he love her too?

“Why did you do that?”

Vader rubbed the back of his neck awkwardly. He wasn’t used this kind of conversation and he wasn’t sure how to answer her question without leading to other impossible questions.

“I didn’t want one of my children to die. I didn’t want to see you hurt either, especially with everything you’ve been through the last few years.”

Her eyes watered as she motioned for him to sit by her on the bed. She reached up and pulled him into a passionate kiss, the first one they had really shared since he had found her again. His hands became entangled in her hair and she pulled him even closer to her. Suddenly he pulled away breathlessly.

“Padme... we probably shouldn’t be doing this... I mean you just...”

She smiled. “It’s ok. I can kiss my husband.” She reached up to pull him to her again and this time, he never objected. The passion in their kiss lingered on until they were interrupted by the cries of their children.

“Looks like they’re up.” She said softly. He smiled back at her and got up to pick up their son. He handed their daughter to Padme, who promptly began to feed her.

“You know,” She said. “We need to give them names.”

“Yes we do.”

She laughed lightly at his good-natured expression. Then, his face took on a more somber appearance.

“There’s still some matters we need to discuss, though.” He said soberly.

She nodded in agreement, then looked back down at her daughter. Suddenly, everything that had seemed alright a second ago had completely shifted to a problem that surfaced in the eyes of her husband. She swallowed uneasily, a deep sense of foreboding filling her trembling body.

18. Luke and Leia

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Eighteen

Padme's eyes fluttered open. She yawned, still tired from the previous day's exertions. When she looked around the room, her eyes focused on a touching sight. On the chair next to her bed sat her husband, who at that moment, was whispering to their children. She strained to hear what he was saying to them, but sighed when she realized her efforts where in vain.

Vader looked up when he heard Padme sigh. He whispered one last thing to each of his children before setting them back in their cribs. He walked over to where Padme sat and placed a hand on top of hers.

"Did you sleep well?"

She nodded and he smiled as she yawned again.

"I don't think I'll ever feel normal again." She laughed lightly.

He nodded and wrapped her in a comforting embrace.

"I think it just takes time. Once you can get out of bed, I'm sure everything will slowly go back to normal."

"What where you saying to them just now?"

He grinned slyly and replied: "That is between me and my children. If you want to find out, you'll have to ask them yourself."

She punched him in the shoulder lightly and pouted.

"Alright, alright! I was just asking them what they wanted their names to be."

She smiled brightly and added: "I've been thinking about that too."

"And?"

"My grandmother had the most beautiful name. I've always loved it and it really suited her. Delicate yet strong."

"What?"

"Leia."

He smiled and looked down at his daughter. "Well, what do you think?" He looked back at Padme as he continued: "I think she likes it."

"Then I think Leia it is." She smiled back.

He nodded his agreement and turned his attention to their son.

“So what about him?”

“Well I named our daughter, you can name our son.”

He smiled softly and looked back down at his son, deeply concentrating on the task at hand.

“Luke.”

Their eyes met and they both nodded at the same time.

“Luke and Leia. It’s perfect.” Padme reached out to her husband and motioned for him to place a child in her arms. He obliged her and placed Luke in her arms, then he picked up Leia.

“You know, I think we have the most beautiful children in the world.” Padme said softly as she lightly kissed Luke’s forehead. Her husband nodded and carefully placed Leia back in her crib. He gently took his sleeping son from his wife’s arms and put him next to his sister.

“Padme, we really need to talk, especially now that they’re sleeping.”

Padme’s face immediately changed from peaceful to afraid as he took her hand and sat on the bed next to her.

“We need to talk about what you almost did.”

“I didn’t do anything.”

“But you were going to. Do you still plan on taking my children away from me?”

“No, no, no. I’m not going to do that.”

“But you were going to.”

“I didn’t think you would find me before I gave birth.”

“Still, you were going to separate them and keep them as far away from me as possible. Why?”

“I already told you. I didn’t want them to be trained as Siths. I still don’t.”

“What are you planning then?”

“I don’t know. But I can’t let what happened to you, happen to our children.”

“Now, Padme…”

“No, I don’t care. It can’t happen. They will be better off if they never came near the Emperor. I don’t care what happens to me, you can kill me for all I care, but they can never fall into his hands. Obi-Wan was right, you know. He was. He said that they wouldn’t be innocent anymore once the Emperor gets his hands on them. I want to keep my children innocent.”

“Padme, this is very serious. You can’t do that. How can you? We’re on our way back to Corusant now. It’s not possible for you to hide them away.”

Padme gazed at him sadly, trying to think of the best way to say what was on her mind.

"I know that."

"So you won't try anything?"

"No, you have my word."

He nodded and squeezed her hand.

"That's what I thought, Padme. I had to ask, though."

She nodded back to him and quickly brushed the stray tear that had fallen down her cheek. He leaned over and kissed her tenderly on the forehead, then got up to take one last look at his children.

"Are you going somewhere?"

"I have to attend to business on the trip. I am in charge after all." He chuckled to himself.

She smiled back then a hand came to her throat. "What are you going to do with Bail?"

He turned a grim gaze to her: "I couldn't let him live, Padme."

Her face contorted in both pain and shock and tears began to form in her eyes. "You didn't..."

"No, I didn't. I ordered it."

Her lower lip trembled and he reached out to brush away her tears. He leaned down and kissed her softly on the lips.

"I'll be back later to check on you."

"Ok."

He turned and started to walk out the door. Just as he put his hand on the door, she spoke again.

"You know, everything that happens after this moment is entirely up to you."

He turned back to face her. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that what happens to me, what happens to our children, that's up to you. Our children and I aren't being given any choices here. But you do have choices. You can send them to a horrible fate with the Emperor, or you can let them go somewhere where they can really have a life that's worth living."

"Padme, you know I can't do that."

"Yes you can. The ability to do make your own choices is there, it's just buried deep inside you. You've been under the Emperor's control for too long and you need to do something about it. You can't go on living like this. And neither can I. You know how unhappy we'll all be if you surrender us to this fate."

"Padme, I..."

"No, don't say anything. Just think about what I said."

His brow furrowed in frustration at his predicament and abruptly left the room. He practically ran to his chambers and threw himself onto his bed. His chest heaved and his entire body trembled. He couldn't believe what Padme had just uttered. The nerve... the audacity... how could she do that to him? Actually suggest that he betray his Master and runaway with her and their children? He couldn't do that... there was no way they would ever be safe he could somehow. And who was to say that his family wouldn't be happy? Maybe Padme was overreacting and everything would work itself out.

He sighed and ran a hand absentmindedly through his unruly hair. He was just kidding himself. Something inside of him was telling him what he needed to... as his wife's words echoed in his head.

19. Orders

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Nineteen

Padme yawned and stretched her arms behind her head. It had been two very long days and the doctor had finally told her that she could get out of bed. Small amounts at a time, but it was a step in the right direction. She gazed at her sleeping angels and smiled softly. She slowly eased herself out of bed and walked over to their cribs. She placed a tender kiss on each of their foreheads.

Her thoughts clouded with the last conversation she had had with her husband. It had been a day and she still hadn't seen him. He had said he would come back to check on her, but he hadn't. A part of her was sincerely regretting the suggestion she had made. What if he relayed that to the Emperor? Where would that leave her and her children? She shook her head, trying to rid her mind of all negative thoughts. She knew him and she knew that he wouldn't tell the Emperor. He would never put her in danger. He would be breaking his promise if he did.

"Milady? We've just landed on Corusant. Lord Vader has instructed me to help you bring the children inside."

She could only nod her response, overcome with shock that he wasn't even going to help them off the ship. He was really that angry by what she had said and that scared her to death. He was unpredictable with these types of situations. It was very likely that he would tell his Master what she had suggested to him. And then that would be the end for her. She would never get to see her children grow and they would be surrendered to the Emperor. She shook her head... no, that wasn't going to happen. She had to stay positive and hope for the best. Hope that her husband would finally come to his senses and wake up from the coma he had been in for almost three years.

Vader paced back and forth around his chambers. His thoughts immediately drifted to his family and he wished he could take back his impulsive decision to not accompany Padme off the ship. He had wanted to be there for her. He had wanted to carry his children off the ship and into their new home. But he couldn't bring himself to face her. The dilemma he was now faced with was greater than any he had ever encountered in his entire life. Stay or go? Relent or flee? It should have been any easy decision, but his mind and his heart were pulling him in two different directions. One was telling him he must obey his mandate at all costs. The other told him he needed to do what was best for his family. Yet, both of those choices held severe consequences and he couldn't decide which one was less damaging for his family.

Sighing dejectedly, he exited his chambers and headed for Padme's. He was going to put a stop to all this once and for all.

Padme had finally settled in and had managed to put the twins to sleep. She had just seated herself comfortably on the sofa when a knock came from the door,

She reluctantly got up and walked towards the door, muttering curses to herself. She flung open the door to reveal a very somber Vader.

“Hello, Padme.”

“Hello.”

“How are they?”

“Funny you should ask that. You didn’t really seem to care yesterday.”

He grimaced at her comment, feeling the severity of her truth pierce his already guilt-ridden heart.

“I’m sorry about that. I just thought that we needed some time alone to think.”

“Well you can’t do that anymore, not since three days ago at least.”

“I know and again, I’m sorry for the way I’ve acted. But I came here because I wanted to end this. I want to just forget any of this ever happened. Let’s just forget everything, the kidnapping, our last conversation. It never happened.”

Her face broke out into a beautiful grin and she rushed into his arms. “Thank you.”

He kissed her hair and pulled her even closer to him.

“Can I see them?”

“They’re sleeping. It really would not be wise to wake them either.”

He chuckled and nodded in agreement. Rubbing the back of his neck, he said, “I’ve missed them, though. It’s hard to explain, but I’m finding myself distracted from everything else. All I can think about is them. If I’m going to be a good father...” He trailed off, contemplating the seriousness of his last statement. He had made his choice, he had to obey his Master. But was it the right one?

Padme watched him carefully, desperately trying to read the expression on his face. He wasn’t going to let them have peace and happiness she wanted but at least he wasn’t going to tell the Emperor what she had planned. He held their futures in the palm of his hand and now, it felt like he was surrendering them. She could see pain now in his expression and she could almost see the internal conflict in his eyes. What was he just saying? He was wondering if he was going to be a good father... she was sure that he could be. There was just the issue of training their children as Siths.

Vader walked quickly over to his children’s cribs and easily picked each child up. Padme walked towards them and rested her head on her husband’s shoulder, her eyes closing slightly.

“The Emperor wishes to see Luke immediately.”

Padme nodded and fought desperately to hold back the tears that threatened to spill down her cheeks. Vader noticed this and nervously bit his lower lip as his gaze shifted involuntarily

from his wife to his son. A strange feeling, more like a sinking feeling, slowly crept down his spine and he almost cringed at it.

There was no use to argue. Their fates were sealed.

“Very good, Lord Vader. Very good.”

Vader nodded and bowed once again to his Master, pride shining in his eyes. The Emperor handed Luke back to his father, who gave him to a storm trooper. Vader watched the storm trooper leave the room, then turned his eyes back to his Master.

“I’ve heard an interesting tale, Lord Vader. A little bee told me you had the chance to get rid of Kenobi, yet you didn’t. I’ve also been told that your precious wife was conspiring with him against us.”

Vader swallowed nervously and tried to think of an answer.

“I’m waiting Lord Vader.”

“Yes, Master. The reason Kenobi got away was because the storm troopers couldn’t catch him. My wife had just gone into labor so I immediately put her on the transport. My main priority was to protect the heir, Master.”

The Emperor nodded in satisfaction with his apprentice’s answer. But something was still troubling him...

“And what will you do with your wife?”

Vader’s breath caught in his throat. He had been praying this wouldn’t happen.

“What do you mean, Master?”

“Your wife conspired against me. She tried to keep my heir from me. That is completely unacceptable. You assured me that she was loyal, but apparently, you were gravely mistaken. As far as I am concerned, she has served her purpose. And now that she is a threat, you must get rid of her.”

Vader’s face remained calm and expressionless. Yet inside, he was screaming. No, no, no. He couldn’t do that. He couldn’t.

“Lord Vader, you will obey me.”

Vader nodded, knowing that if he didn’t carry out his orders, it would prove him to be disloyal to his Master. But Padme... he couldn’t kill her. She was a part of him. She was his wife.

The Emperor made a swift motion with his hand and the doors to the throne room opened, revealing a very frightened Padme. The storm trooper prodded her to move towards her husband and before she knew it, she was standing in front of the Emperor.

“Now, Lord Vader.”

Vader sighed to gather his strength and despite the screams in his head, he ignited his lightsaber.

20. Rebirth

Author's Note: Sorry it took so long to update. I had three tests last week! Hope it was worth the wait...

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Twenty

Padme's eyes widened in both shock and terror as the red glow of Vader's light saber reflected on her face. What shocked her most was the fact that his weapon was directed at her and not at the Emperor like she had prayed he would. She did the only thing she could: she looked him square in the eyes and pleaded with him silently. He wouldn't do this, she knew him, she knew this wouldn't happen, this was all just a horrible dream that she was bound to wake up from soon.

Her scared, soulful brown eyes locked with Vader's equally terrified eyes. He found himself unable to break away from her gaze and somehow, over his Master's screams for him to complete his task, he heard her sweet voice:

"I love you."

His lips quivered and he felt his grip on his weapon loosen. He had longed to hear those words escape from her lips and now... she had finally said what he had been dying to hear. She loved him. She loved him... but she was saying goodbye. She was saying goodbye because he was going to kill the only person he had ever truly loved.

His gaze shifted from his wife to his Master and he felt something break down inside of him. The wall that he had so meticulously constructed was crumbling at those three beautiful words and he couldn't be happier. Yet, this put him in a very compromising position.

Suddenly, the doors were broken down and a small army of rebel soldiers burst into the room, led by Obi-Wan. Vader's gaze with his wife was now broken and his eyes locked onto Obi-Wan as Obi-Wan's eyes widened in shock at the direction Vader's weapon was pointed towards. Padme's eyes shifted desperately from her husband to Obi-Wan. The tension in the room was thick and suddenly as Vader looked at Padme's frightened, tear-stained face one more time, his decision was made.

Suddenly, a flash of red swooshed down, followed by an anguished cry.

Padme rushed into her husband's arms and cried loudly: "Oh, Anakin! I knew it!"

"Sshh. It's ok, now. Everything's going to be alright. You're safe now." He whispered soothingly, lightly stroking her hair. He caressed her face lovingly and realized that this might very well be the last time he would ever touch her and hold her.

"Padme, you need to go with Obi-Wan."

Her body trembled and she lifted scared and confused eyes to meet his.

“What? No...”

“I don’t deserve to live, Padme. Not after everything I’ve done. Just like my Master. We’re both evil and I deserve everything that the rebels give me.”

“No, no, Anakin. You’re not like him. You never were. You’re back now. We can leave and raise Luke and Leia now. We’re safe.”

He nodded and held her tighter.

“I need to atone for my sins. I don’t deserve to just leave now with you because I’ve killed the Emperor. It doesn’t work that way.”

“But why can’t it? You and Obi-Wan can restore the Jedi Order and you can train Luke and Leia as Jedi. I don’t see why you have to just surrender now after you’ve come so far.”

“Maybe it has to be this way, Padme. I have to do this. It’s only right. Besides, you’ll be safe with Obi-Wan. He’ll take care of you.”

“No, I want you. I want you to be a father to your children.”

“Everything you said before, about our children being safer away from me, you were right about that. I’m a danger to them, I’m a danger to you, I’m even a danger to myself. It’s better this way, Padme. I know you don’t see that now, but it’s true. I’m setting you free. Go... go with Obi-Wan.”

He pushed her slightly towards a very shocked and surprised Obi-Wan and Padme quickly resisted and rushed back to him.

Obi-Wan finally spoke up: “He’s right, Padme. We can get the twins and leave here now and you’ll be safe.”

“But it’s already safe. The Emperor is dead. I don’t need to be set free, Anakin. I’m already free because I love you. I always have, even that night by the fire, I loved you. I just couldn’t admit it to myself until recently. Anakin, I need you. Our children need their father. Please, don’t do this.”

“I don’t have a choice. I have to.”

“You don’t have to do anything. You need to live. I couldn’t survive if anything happened to you. Please... I just got you back, I can’t lose you now.”

Tears rolled down her cheek and he reached out to wipe them away. Oh, how he loved her. He realized now that he had never stopped loving her. He had just been blind. But he could see now. No matter what happened to him now, he loved her and he knew that she loved him. That was enough. He could die happy, especially now that he knew his family would be taken care of.

Obi-Wan broke the moment: “Padme we need to go.” He motioned for her to come to him and she furiously shook her head in response. No, there was no way that she was leaving her husband there.

“You’ll have to kill me first, Obi-Wan.”

“What... Padme... you can’t possibly mean...”

“You know exactly what I mean.” She replied and stepped in between Anakin and Obi-Wan.

“Padme, I told you to go with him. Don’t be stupid.”

She looked at him lovingly as she replied to her husband: “Then I guess I’m just stupid. Because I’m not leaving you.”

Obi-Wan looked back and forth between Padme and his former apprentice. As he looked at Vader now, there was an evident change in him, one that he had never expected to see. His eyes. His eyes were no longer ice... they were warm and caring and brimming with love and devotion for his wife. These were not the eyes of the monster, but the eyes of a man. A man who had made a horrible error in judgment. Perhaps...

“Padme, what about the children? They need you more than ever now. Go, if not for yourself, then for them.”

He wiped a stray tear from her cheek and pushed her slightly towards Obi-Wan. He knew that she would have to leave him now. She didn’t have any other choice, not where their children were concerned.

Padme’s face contorted in anguish as she slowly nodded to him. She ran back into his arms and kissed him with all the force that was within her. His arms wrapped around her tightly and he returned her kiss with equal force. When the kiss ended, she stroked his curls softly.

“I love you.”

He smiled back at her and found it increasingly difficult to hold back the tears that threatened to spill.

“I know you do, Padme. I love you too.”

At those words, her body shook with sobs and he pulled her to him again.

“I love you Padme. I always have and I always will. No matter what happens now, just remember that.”

She nodded and wiped the tears from her eyes. With one last look at her husband, she lifted her chin and walked towards Obi-Wan.

“Let’s go.”

He led her into the hallway and whispered to an officer on their way out: “Do not kill him. Bring him back to the base, alive.”

As the doors closed, Anakin finally released the emotion he had been repressing for over three years. He knelt to the ground as the troops grew closer to him and cried. He cried for his wife, for his soon-to-be fatherless children, and he cried for himself, for the man that he realized that he had always been.

21. Trials

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Twenty-One

Anakin shut his eyes tightly and exhaled. It was only a matter of time now. Soon, his life would be over. He prayed that Padme and their children would be alright. He just wished that he had had more time with them. He felt like he had barely gotten to spend time with his newborn children and his wife... he needed to be with her now more than ever.

After the rebel soldiers had taken him captive, it seemed like it had been one transport after another. Too much moving around when all he wanted to do was sit down and pray for his family. He knew he didn't have much time left to do that. It was time for him to pay for his transgressions and he knew it.

A rebel soldier entered his room and Anakin looked at him with annoyance for interrupting his thoughts.

"Come this way, Vader."

Anakin quickly rose from his seat and followed the soldier. After what seemed like hours, they finally reached the communications room. He quickly took his seat and looked around, realizing that he was on the rebel base and the room he was in was not a communications room at all. It was extremely large and had several stories that reminded him of what used to be the Senate meeting room. This was it. His trial was about to begin. It was the beginning of the end of his life.

He gazed at the faces that surrounded him in the several stories of the room. He saw Yoda and felt a wave of relief wash over him. A part of him had always hoped that Yoda was still alive. Then his eyes fell on Obi-Wan and despite everything that had happened between them, he was still glad to see him there.

Almost immediately after, his eyes locked with the soft brown ones of his wife. His heart leapt at the sight of her and a soft smile crept to his face. He had been so worried about her that he had allowed himself to forget the image of her beautiful face. He could almost curse himself for that, but he had done it on purpose. Her beautiful image would have made it that much harder to focus, to not feel sorry for himself. His heart soared when she returned his smile and he could see tears glistening in her eyes. Through his eyes, he tried desperately to tell her that everything was going to be fine, that she had to be strong, that he was sorry for everything he had done to her.

His thoughts were interrupted by the beginning of his trial. A strange looking creature appeared to be presiding over his trial and Anakin took a deep breath. He listened with a pained expression as the accounts of his transgressions were retold before the entire court. Every moment his eyes lifted to where Padme sat. She smiled reassuring at him each time, but he could tell that the trial was much more difficult on her than it was on him. When she

thought he wasn't looking, he could see her lips tremble so badly that she had to bite them to stop her shaking. Oh, Padme... I'm so sorry. All of this is my fault...

"Lord Vader, would you like to speak on your own behalf?"

Anakin nodded quickly and stood up, knowing that no matter what he said, his fate was still the same.

"I have taken the lives of many innocent people. For that, I realize there is nothing I can say. Nothing I can do. Because I can't change the actions that I've taken. I can't change the path that I chose. I can say, however, that I regret it. That I wish I could change everything that's happened. That I have realized that Palpatine was not that man I thought he was. I regret the pain I have caused to millions. I've realized that everything I've done has been for the wrong reasons. Everything I've done since I left the Jedi Order has been evil and calculating. I'm a horrible person. There's only one thing in my life that's worth living for and I don't deserve it," he paused and looked at Padme meaningfully. "I don't deserve anything good. I don't deserve anything worthwhile. Do whatever you feel is right."

With that he sat down and looked up at Padme's tear-stained face and tried to smile at her. His sentence was announced shortly after his speech and he watched painfully as Padme's body shook with sobs. He looked on gratefully as Obi-Wan placed a comforting arm around her shoulders and he nodded to him. For some reason Anakin couldn't quite figure out, Obi-Wan was not looking at him with disdain, but was intensely staring with soft eyes. Anakin shook that from his thoughts and let himself wish that he could be there for Padme instead of Obi-Wan. He could accept his fate, but he knew that Padme would never be able to.

After being led back to his room, he sat down dejectedly and placed his head in his hands. He knew his time was up. He just wished that he could have just one more moment with her. He just wanted a chance to say goodbye.

His thoughts were interrupted yet again when someone entered his room. His mouth dropped in shock when he realized who it was.

"Obi-Wan."

"Hello."

"What are you doing here?"

"I just came to see how you were doing." He replied, taking a mental note of his former apprentice's calm demeanor, kind eyes, and soft voice.

"Oh."

"Did you mean what you said at the trial?"

"Every word."

Obi-Wan nodded thoughtfully and sat down next to Anakin.

"Are you comfortable here?"

Anakin looked around and laughed despite his situation.

"About as comfortable as you can be."

Obi-Wan laughed with him, his eyes shining.

“Yes, if I remember correctly you could get comfortable just about anywhere.”

Laughter rang in the room again and it was as if old friends had miraculously been reunited. Once the laughs had subsided, Anakin’s face quickly grew serious.

“Is Padme alright?”

“She took the news of your death sentence hard. I wouldn’t have expected anything less from her. She’s a remarkable woman and extremely loyal.”

Anakin nodded and smiled. “What about the twins? Are they alright?”

“They’re perfectly fine. Very healthy. Padme’s with them right now.”

“Good. Just as it should be.”

Obi-Wan nodded and smiled at his former apprentice.

“Can I ask you one more thing before you go?”

“Anything.”

“Do you regret everything?”

“No. The only thing I don’t regret is Padme. Although there are some things I wish I could’ve done differently, I don’t regret my time with her for a second. I love her Obi-Wan. And I love our children. I suppose if any good came from all of this, it’s them. Will you do something for me?”

“Of course.”

“Train them. Take them as your padawans. They’re the Order’s only hope for survival now.”

Obi-Wan nodded and slowly reached out his hand. Anakin took it and they shook hands fiercely. When they finally released, Obi-Wan reluctantly turned to leave.

“Goodbye, Obi-Wan. Thank you for coming to see me.”

Obi-Wan nodded quickly.

“You’re welcome. Goodbye.”

Anakin watched sadly as his former Master left the room. That was the last time he would ever see him. At least now, perhaps he could die knowing that their fractured relationship had been at least partially mended.

Obi-Wan quickly exited the room and leaned against the wall. He had been right. He knew it.

22. A Confession and an Intruder

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Twenty-Two

Anakin sat in his jail cell, impatiently awaiting for his sentence to be carried out. He had only really been there for two days, but he was driving himself insane. He knew it was too late for him, yet he constantly worried about what would happen to Padme, and how his death would effect Luke and Leia. He had too many things on his mind, way too much to consider, so much unfinished business. He tried telling himself that he was getting what he deserved, that it was justice for his the crimes he had committed. Yet, he couldn't help it. Just when his life was finally getting back on track, it was going to be snatched right out from under him.

Anakin was so deep in thought that he didn't even realize that he had a visitor. He jumped up immediately and quickly closed the short distance between them.

"Obi-Wan? What you are doing here at this hour? Again?"

"I was instructed to inform you that your sentence will be carried out tomorrow morning."

Anakin nodded and desperately tried to shield the pain from his eyes. "I see."

After a short pause, he continued, "Padme isn't going to be there, is she?"

Obi-Wan quickly shook his head in response. "Several of the rebel lieutenants believed it would be appropriate if she was there, but I quickly abolished that idea."

"Thank you. How is she? Will I see her before..."

Obi-Wan shook his head again, this time more somberly. "I'm sorry. Those same rebel lieutenants that wanted Padme to be there tomorrow also thought it was a bad idea for you to see her. I tried to reason with them, but they wouldn't listen."

Anakin nodded, disappointed but yet found himself somewhat hopeful. "Thank you for trying."

Obi-Wan nodded graciously to his former apprentice, an intense expression on his face as if he was deep in thought.

"There's something I need to know before I go. And I need you to tell me the exact truth."

"Of course."

"Why did you stop Palpatine from terminating Leia?"

Anakin took a deep breath, then exhaled it loudly. "She was my flesh. My daughter. When the Emperor—Palpatine, ordered me to get rid of her, all I could think was that I couldn't murder my own child." He paused cautiously, taking in Obi-Wan's reaction to his words. "After the initial shock wore off, I started to think of what that would do to Padme. How was

I going to explain that to her? How was I going to explain that to Luke? I knew there was no way I could go through with it or allow anyone else to lay a hand on a member of my family.”

“Then you convinced him to keep Leia has a spare, if you will?”

“Yes.”

“Did you ever tell Padme this? This might be something she’d like to know.”

“I did on accident, actually, shortly after the twins were born. We had been arguing about your plans for the children and I blurted it out to her.”

“I’m glad she knows.”

“Yes. Hopefully it will give her peace of mind. Is that all you wanted to know, Obi-Wan?”

Obi-Wan watched Anakin carefully and slowly, his grim expression changed to something completely indescribable. Anakin didn’t understand the sudden change in Obi-Wan and his eyes wandered to the floor in thought.

“That’s all I needed to know. And thank you for telling me the truth; it gives me peace of mind as well.”

Anakin stepped closer to his former Master, somewhat cautiously, and extended his hand out to Obi-Wan. Obi-Wan took it and quickly pulled Anakin closer to him and engulfed him in a bear hug.

“I guess this is goodbye?”

Obi-Wan smiled pensively and replied quietly: “Yes, my friend. I won’t be seeing you for a long time.”

“Ssshhhh... it’s alright Leia. I know, I know. I wish he was here too. But we just have to make the best of it. We have to be strong for your father.” Padme whispered softly into her daughter’s ear.

She leaned down and wearily set a squirming Leia down next to her brother. “See, Luke’s sleeping. Why don’t you join him for a while? Mommy needs at least one hour of sleep tonight.”

After Leia had quieted down, Padme sat down in a nearby chair, completely exhausted. She had known having a child was difficult. Lots of long nights, sleepless nights. But two seemed inconceivable, especially now that she had to raise two children by herself. She exasperatedly released the breath she had been holding. Anakin. What was she going to do without him? What were their children going to do without their father? It was just too tragic, too painful to think about.

She had just got him back. Anakin was alive again, resurrected from the dead. She had always known that he was there somewhere, buried deep within Vader. She had seen what no one else did. But yet that couldn’t save him. He was going to die the next morning and there was nothing she could do to help him. She hadn’t been allowed to see him and that tore her up inside. She would kill for just one moment, one more second with him. One last chance to

kiss him, to hold him, to tell him how much she loved him, how much she'd always love him, that there would never be another. But she didn't have that chance, despite Obi-Wan's best efforts to help her.

Slowly wiping the tears that had fallen down her pale cheeks, she rose from her chair and stood near the window. Obi-Wan had been such a good friend. He was always trying to do what he thought was best, what was right. Yet, even the great General Kenobi could not help her husband. As much as she hated to admit it, her husband had committed many horrible crimes. There was no denying that fact. Justice would be served the next morning, but she would do anything in her power to stop it. If only the members of the court could see what she saw in her husband. She was almost sure that Obi-Wan had sensed it, but that in itself was not enough.

The outside world was moving so fast that she knew she couldn't keep up with it. Because her own little world was crashing down right in front of her. And there was nothing she could do to stop it. All of the pieces of the life she held so dear were falling apart. A life with the infamous Darth Vader was not something she had wanted a year ago. Yet she couldn't picture her life with anyone else. For the man that had once been Darth Vader completely dominated her world and her thoughts. He had given her the two most wonderful gifts a man can give a woman: children and love.

Without warning, Padme was thrown from her thoughts. Her door creaked open yet she couldn't see in the dark. There was an intruder in her room. Her maternal instincts quickly kicked into gear and she sprinted over to where her children slept, shielding them with her body.

"Whoever you are, get out now!"

Her command was met with silence and she tried again.

"I said get out! I'm calling security..."

Gathering up her children quickly in her protective arms, she rushed over to the comlink and starting calling for security.

Suddenly, a hand reached out and stopped her from completing the message. She dared to look up and was met by the most astonishing pair of eyes she had ever seen in her life...

Author's Note: Sorry that was so short. What do you think is going to happen? Well, our story is coming to an end and I'm pretty sure that the next chapter will be the last... but if I get a lot of reviews, I just might feel compelled to write an epilogue! It's up to you... so please read and review...

23. Second Chances

TO LOVE A SITH

Chapter Twenty-Three

Padme looked up and stared into the most astonishing eyes she had ever seen in her life. Eyes that she had never thought she would ever see again. Somehow she found her voice and whispered: “Anakin.”

He smiled gently and reached out to wipe the tears that had now fallen down her cheeks. He carefully took each of his children from her and laid them gently in their cribs.

“How is this possible...” She whispered, leaning against him. Her eyes followed his hand gesture to one of the most unlikely of rescuers. Obi-Wan. She smiled gratefully to him and turned her gaze back to her husband.

“Everything’s going to be alright now, isn’t?”

He took her in his arms and stroked her arm lovingly. “Yes, we’re going to be alright now.”

She took his face in her hands and kissed him gently, then with growing passion. It felt so good to have him back in her arms. Anakin was finally back. They could be together now just as they should have been three years ago. Yet, somehow she had a feeling that things might have gone differently if she had given in all those years ago.

“Obi-Wan, you have to tell me... how... how is he here now? What did you do?”

Obi-Wan chuckled lightly at her astonished words and stepped closer to the couple.

“I just realized that something had happened to give him back to us. And I’m pretty sure what happened to turn Vader back into Anakin.” He smiled knowingly at Padme and she quickly closed the distance between them and embraced him.

“Thank you, Obi-Wan. You’ve been such a good friend to both of us. I don’t know how we’ll ever repay you.”

Obi-Wan released her and met Anakin’s eyes before he spoke. “Train your children in the ways of the Jedi. That’s how you can repay me. Besides, you are the Chosen One after all.”

Anakin rolled his eyes good-naturedly at his former Master turned rescuer. Very quickly, his expression became a serious one. He owed Obi-Wan his life and he had every intention of training his children, not just for Obi-Wan or himself, but for the rest of the universe. He reached out to shake Obi-Wan’s hand and his former Master took it.

“Now you must go. Take whatever you can with you, but you must leave now.”

Anakin and Padme nodded simultaneously and Padme quickly left to gather a few bags together.

“Obi-Wan, I can’t thank you enough.”

Obi-Wan nodded. "Everyone deserves a second chance, Anakin. Sometimes even a third or a fourth. You earned it, that was evident after you killed Palpatine. You deserve to have your life with Padme and your children, even though there are a few people who would disagree with me."

Anakin laughed heartily while Obi-Wan continued: "But then again, they don't know you like I know you, do they?"

"Obi-Wan, you've always been like a father to me. Not only that but my best friend as well. I'll never forget what you've done for me and my family."

The two friends embraced just as Padme re-entered with their baggage. She smiled at the two.

"Anakin, we're all ready. We should take Obi-Wan's advice and get out of here as soon as possible."

Anakin nodded quickly and took the bags from Padme as she reached over to gather her children in her arms. Obi-Wan led them to the hidden transport he had prepared for them and they boarded within moments.

As the hatch to the transport began to close, Obi-Wan called out: "Goodbye friends!"

The transport took off, taking Anakin and his family to their new home.

After Padme had settled Luke and Leia, she joined her husband in the cockpit.

"Are they finally sleeping?"

"Yes, finally sleeping."

"Good, come here."

She walked closer to him and he unceremoniously pulled her into his lap.

"Anakin..."

"Don't worry, angel, it's on auto-pilot."

Her melodious laughter was music to his ears and he quickly captured her mouth in a passionate kiss. It was the kind of kiss that could easily lead to so much more, the kind of kiss that two people in love shared. But Padme broke the kiss and gently put her finger to his lips before he could protest.

"We have all the time in the world for this, Anakin. Right now, I want to savor this moment. I want you to tell me everything."

He nodded and she leaned her head against his chest.

"I've done a lot of horrible things, Padme. I honestly don't understand how you were able to love me when I was Vader."

"I think that was because I loved you when you were Anakin. Vader looked just like you, he sounded like you, he felt like you... it wasn't hard to let myself believe that Vader was you."

“But I wasn’t.”

“No, you weren’t. But whenever you looked at me, Anakin, something changed in you. I could see it, even if it was just for a moment. You were Anakin again, if only for a moment.”

“Ahhh, I never knew it was that obvious.”

Padme laughed before answering. “It kind of was. I think I was your weakness.”

“You still are.”

She smiled lovingly and he reached out to stroke her hair.

“Your hair is so beautiful Padme. You’re so beautiful. I still can’t believe that we’re here. I still can’t believe that you’re here with him. That we’re married. That we have two gorgeous children.”

“Well it’s true. And now we have a life together. I never thought this was going to happen for us. I thought I was stuck with Vader for the rest of my life!”

“And now you’re stuck with me.”

“I think I like you better.”

She leaned forward and lightly kissed his lips before he drew her to him tightly.

“God, I love you, Padme. I should have said it so many times. I’m going to make up for that. I’m going to make up for all the pain I’ve caused you.”

“You already have, Anakin.”

“What do you mean?”

“You what to know how I was completely sure that you had come back to me? It wasn’t just the fact that you killed the Emperor. You were willing to pay the consequences for your actions. You were willing to accept your fate and your sentence, even if it meant death. That’s how I knew that you were back. And even before that, you saved my life, you saved Leia’s life. You saved all our lives by saving us from a life with Darth Vader.”

“I don’t know what to say, Padme.”

“You don’t have to say anything. You just being here, all of us free, that’s all I need Anakin.”

They met in a forceful, yet passionate kiss and Anakin knew he was home. After so many years of wandering, of feeling lost, he was home. He had been given a second chance to have a life with Padme, thanks to Obi-Wan. But he had been given another chance long before that. Although Padme had just spoken about how he had saved their family, he knew that she was solely responsible for that. She had given him a second chance at life and second chance at being a good person when he had gone so astray. He was right where he belonged. He had always known that his life would intertwine with Padme’s. But he had never guessed that lasting impact that she would have on his life. He loved her completely, unconditionally and he knew that love was returned in full. He was now truly complete. He had his life, he had his children, and he had Padme.

THE END.

Author's Note: Thanks to everyone for sticking with me through this! It's been a long ride, but I'm glad I did this. I have decided to write an epilogue, so look for that sometime soon. Thanks to everyone again!

24. Epilogue

TO LOVE A SITH

Epilogue

Anakin rolled over on his side, unable to sleep this particular night. His thoughts were jumbled and his mind was running a mile a minute. It was as if his mind wouldn't allow him to sleep, to remind him that he was still here, that he was still alive. At that thought, he glanced over where his wife slept. He smiled softly as he gazed at her, amazed at her beauty, and calmed by her peacefulness. One look at her and every disturbing thought, everything that troubled him just melted away and everything was simple again.

*I could stay awake just to hear you breathing
Watch you smile while you are sleeping
While you're far away and dreaming
I could spend my life in this sweet surrender
I could stay lost in this moment forever
Well, every moment spent with you
Is a moment I treasure.*

He loved her. He loved her more than anything in the world, next to Luke and Leia of course. They were getting so big and had had their first birthday the week before. It was hard to believe that so much time had passed since his life had changed forever. Life was a gift and he had every reason to believe that. And to think that today had been the first anniversary of his execution day. But here he was, lying next to his angel.

*I don't wanna close my eyes
I don't wanna fall asleep
'Cause I'd miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing
'Cause even when I dream of you
The sweetest dream would never do
I'd still miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing*

He had been a horrible person. His life had had only two purposes: to kill and destroy. He hadn't realized how empty his life was until Padme came back into his life. He could still remember the stab of pain through his heart when Palpatine had ordered the deaths of all disloyal Senators, knowing instantly that that meant Padme would be killed. That moment, perhaps, was the beginning of the end for Darth Vader. It sparked the rebirth of Anakin Skywalker and now, there was no where in the universe he would rather be.

*Lying close to you
Feeling your heart beating
And I'm wondering what you're dreaming
Wondering if it's me you're seeing*

*Then I kiss your eyes and thank God we're together
And I just wanna stay with you
In this moment forever, forever and ever*

She had brought so much disruption to his life. His entire world was turned upside down the moment he found her again, and she hadn't even realized it. Or maybe she had. She still claimed that every time he looked at her, something changed in his eyes. There was no doubt that was true. Every time he looked at her, he melted and found his reason for being in her deep, soulful eyes.

*I don't wanna close my eyes
I don't wanna fall asleep
'Cause I'd miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing
'Cause even when I dream of you
The sweetest dream would never do
I'd still miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing*

He smiled softly again when he thought of Luke and Leia. They had said their first words not too long ago. They were growing up so fast and it was hard to believe that just a year ago, they were tiny newborns. Now they were walking and giving their parents hell, but that was the best part. He loved being a father and he loved being a husband. He shook his head lightly in disbelief at his good fortune and pulled Padme a little closer to him.

*I don't wanna miss one kiss
Well, I just wanna be with you
Right here with you, just like this
I just wanna hold you close
Feel your heart so close to mine
And just stay here in this moment
For all the rest of time*

He should be dead. He was supposed to be dead a year ago that day. But by some gracious act, Obi-Wan had seen that there was still good in him, just as Padme had. Obi-Wan had broken him out of prison and reunited him with his family when he had lost all hope of ever seeing them again. On the night he was freed, he vowed that he would take advantage of his second chance at life and make the best of it. He took every moment he could to spend time with Luke and Leia when he wasn't working in the shop in the nearby city. After work, he nights were filled with playtime with his two rambunctious children. Padme usually watched, knowing that their time would come after the children were put to sleep. Life was good. In fact, it couldn't be any better. His family was happy and safe and that was all that mattered to him.

*Don't wanna close my eyes
Don't wanna fall asleep
'Cause I'd miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing
'Cause even when I dream of you
The sweetest dream would never do*

*'Cause I'd still miss you, baby
And I don't wanna miss a thing*

Still lost in his thoughts, he failed to notice Padme stirring in his arms.

"Anakin?"

He looked down at his wife's sleepy face and smiled brightly.

"Yeah?"

"Have you been sleeping at all tonight?"

"No, just thinking."

She laughed softly and stroked his cheek playfully.

"What were you thinking about?"

"Us... Luke and Leia."

"Oh, I see."

"You know what today is right?"

Padme's eyes shined directly back at him as she answered: "Yes I do. I thought of it this morning after you left for work actually."

He smiled and nodded in her hair. "I figured as much. You remember everything."

"Hey!" She replied, hitting him playfully on the arm. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Whatever you want it too." He replied slyly.

She could only laugh and snuggled closer to him as he wrapped his arms more tightly around her.

"I love it here." She sighed.

"I know what you mean. Everything seems so peaceful here. Na'par is probably one of the smallest towns in the galaxy. I can't believe Obi-Wan managed to find this place."

"Yeah, but it's peaceful and safe. That's all that really matters, right?"

"Right."

He leaned forward and met her lips in a gentle kiss. Just as they were about to turn things a little more passionate, they heard twin cries from the next room.

Anakin laughed lightly. "Perfect timing, huh?"

Padme laughed in return and was about to get out of bed when Anakin stopped her.

"I'll go. You should rest."

Before she could protest, he slid out of bed and carefully tucked her back in before placing a tender kiss on her forehead.

He walked briskly to the twins' room and leaned down into their cribs.

“Hey guys. What’s the matter?”

He picked Luke up and rocked him gently. “It’s alright, Luke. You gotta go back to sleep so you’re all rested. That way, we can play all tomorrow night no matter what Mommy says.”

Luke reached up and grabbed a fistful of Anakin’s hair. “Dadda.”

“Owwwww....yeah... you just hurt Dadda... that’s not very nice, Luke. Remind me to teach you some manners.”

Anakin smiled in spite of the fact that his scalp still throbbed and sat in the rocking chair next to his children’s cribs. He rocked Luke gently, stroking his head, and placing a kiss every so often on his son’s head. In a short time, Luke was sleeping soundly and as Anakin turned to glance at Leia, he noticed that she had already fallen asleep. He smiled and carefully placed a sleeping Luke back in his crib. Then he crept out of the room and returned to his waiting wife.

“Wow, that was fast.” Padme admonished as Anakin slid back into bed.

“I guess I just have the magic touch.” Anakin said triumphantly.

Padme laughed and leaned over to give him a quick kiss. “You’re their father. I think you’re the only one who can get them back to sleep so fast.”

“I just do the best I can, Padme.”

She smiled and drew him closer to her. “Yes, you do Anakin. You’re a wonderful father. You’re a wonderful husband.”

She looked down at him and they seemed to collide in a fiery kiss. Their passion seemed to light up the room and their love filled the room with a warm glow. No words were needed for the love between them. No one could love her the way he did. And no one could love him like she did, for she had loved him even when he was a Sith.

THE END.

“I Don’t Want to Miss a Thing”-Aerosmith

Author’s Note: Well guys, that’s it. I hope you’ve enjoyed reading this just as much as I’ve enjoyed writing this and reading your reviews. Thanks again to everyone that’s stuck around for this whole story. It really means a lot. I hope the epilogue was what you had been waiting for! I did my best to wrap everything up and answer any unanswered questions you might have. That’s it. Thanks again!